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Vol. XI. AUGUST, 1893. No. 1.

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A BRIGAND'S BALL.

My dear friends, you remember, do you not, the Countess Etiennette de Repey—the young one, of course, not the old one—my black-eyed demon? When I say "my," it is a form of speech, for she is not mine. You, he, I, we all know her. We have all sighed for her; but none of you has had the happiness that I have had, of being in the dead of night with her in her own carriage. It is true that her maid was there also; but, nevertheless, it was a great happiness. And yet I would willingly have deprived myself of it.

We were at her country-house, at Kerchvar. It was already very late in the evening when she suddenly remembered that there was a ball on the following night at the Casino of Arad, and that she had positively promised to be there. She ordered her carriage, and as I was her only guest, she begged me to accompany her.

"My dear Baron, will you come with me?"

What could I answer?

"My dear Countess, the night is very dark, we shall be upset, we shall break some limb, and how can we dance after that? We have the three Kœrass to pass, the bridge over one of them is not firm, and there is every chance of our being drowned. The forest near Szalouta is a nest of brigands. How can I defend you all alone? And then, what is the necessity of going this evening? We can start to-morrow morning after we have had our tea, your superb dapple-grays will put us down at Arad in the afternoon, and we shall have plenty of time to think about your toilet."

That is, word for word, what I said to her; but I

spoke in vain. The more I tried to dissuade her, the more firmly she held out. She did not want to drive post-haste; she wished to rest after the journey; she did not care to jump from her carriage, worn-out and heated, into the ball-room. Then, too, she thought that there was nothing more beautiful than the stars, the frogs, and heaven knows what else. Her whim must be gratified, though the world should come to an end.

I could choose: I might either accompany her or remain in the chateau alone. I went with her, and as a compensation she granted me the favor of sitting opposite to her in the carriage. The journey was a charming one. The Countess loaded me with favors. First of all, she placed a hat-box on my knees, to which she soon added her muff; then she burdened me with some other package, and finally went off to sleep. It was in vain that I spoke; she did not answer. Nevertheless, when too sudden a jolt shook the carriage, she condescended to ask me a series of questions about her work-box, her satchel, her basket, and made inquiries as to whether I was not seated on her hat-box. Upon being reassured, she went off to sleep again. Her maid moaned about her headache. I, in my turn, made believe to sleep.

Suddenly a more violent jolt than any of the others woke us all up. The carriage seemed to have half upset. The Countess, who was still drowsy, asked what had happened. The footman got down from the box and came to the carriage-door.

"Excellency, we have lost our way."

"Well, what does it matter? Is that a reason for stopping? If there is a good road before us, we shall arrive in the end."

"Yes, but——"

"What do you mean by 'yes, but'? The road must surely lead somewhere."

"That is true; yet I fear it does not lead to a good place."

"You are crazy! Is there such a thing as a bad place in the world? Where are we?"

"In the Szalouta forest."

"The forest is not interminable. You can get out of it in two hours, whether you go lengthways or breadthways."

"Yes, but the coachman fears——"

"The coachman, in his contract, did not reserve the right to fear."

"He fears an accident to your Excellency."

"That is not his affair."

"Or for the horses."

"That is no concern of his, either."

"The forest is infested with brigands, or poor boys, as they are called in Hungary."

"The coachman is a goose. Is he not a poor boy, also?"

"He means the poor boys who steal horses."

I thought it proper to take part in the conversation.

"My dear Countess, there is no reason for jesting. You see, it was hardly worth while to start in order to sleep in the depths of the forest. You may have your horses stolen, or your life taken. If I, at least, only had my revolver!"

"To have that stolen, too?"

And thereupon the little demon opened the carriage-door, and, before I could prevent her, alighted.

"What a magnificent night! How delicious the forest smells! How the fire-flies sparkle! Just look, Baron!"

"Look! Why you can't see three steps before you!"

"Yes, yes, you can. Don't you see a light down there among the trees?"

I turned cold! We had fallen into a den of thieves! From the top of his box the coachman answered, in a voice stifled with fear:

"Excellency, it is the *czarda* which keeps its guests." (Proverbial expression for saying: a tavern from which no one ever escapes.)

"If it keeps its guests, it is just what we need. Let us go there."

I was in despair.

"Countess," said I, "in the name of heaven, what do

you mean to do? This is a rendezvous for robbers, where we shall all have our throats cut; a den, the landlord of which lives in constant communication with all the bandits of the country, and where they assassinate persons every night!"

The wicked creature only laughed at me. She told me that we read of such things, but they did not really exist; she added that she would go to another inn if we could find one for her, but as there was only that one, she had no choice. And she ordered the coachman to follow with the carriage, declaring that she would walk on ahead and serve as our guide.

All objections and supplications were useless. We were obliged to follow her toward the inn with all our luggage, for she threatened, if we were frightened, to go alone. Truly, she was afraid of nothing.

As we came near the house, our ears were suddenly struck by strains of merry music, which reached us through half-open windows.

Heavens! the inn was indeed full of brigands!

"Well," said the Countess gayly, "we were going to a ball, and here we find one. We cannot escape from fate."

While she was speaking, she darted toward the door. For a moment I was impelled to turn on my heel, to leave her there in the lurch and make good my own escape. But that would not have been proper. Besides, I could never have rid myself of her maid, who was clinging in despair to my arm. The poor woman was half-dead with fright, and followed her mistress with trembling steps. Through the open window we heard the noise of the dance and the frantic shouts of the men as they rushed about the room. But the Countess was not alarmed; she opened the door boldly and walked in.

The room, long and wide, was whitewashed. In the first moment of emotion I thought there must be at least fifty men in it, dancing and rushing around. Later, on counting them, I saw that there were nine, including the inn-keeper and three *tsiganes* who composed the orchestra. But the five others were quite enough. They

were all tall, strong fellows. Their pipes, which were stuck through the ribbons of their hats, almost touched the main beam in the ceiling. Their shoulders were formidable. Their five rifles were placed against the wall in a corner.

We were in a pretty wasps' nest!

When the wretches saw us, they were so surprised at our audacity that they ceased dancing. The Countess said to them, with her conquering smile:

"Excuse us, my good friends, if we disturb your amusement. We have lost our way, and as we cannot continue our journey to-night, we have come here to seek refuge."

One fellow, straight as the letter I, and finely formed, broke away from the group, twisted his moustaches, took off his hat with a swaggering gesture, brought his heels together, bowed to the Countess, and told her that her appearance did not disturb him; that, on the contrary, it made him very happy, that he was master of the premises for the moment, and that his name was Josgi Feketé (a famous Hungarian brigand). He then asked the Countess who she was.

Before I could pull her by the sleeve to caution her to conceal her name she had already answered:

"I am the Countess Repey; I live at Kerchvar, near here."

"Oh! I have the honor of knowing you. I was acquainted with the old Count, also. He fired his double-barrelled gun at me one day, but missed me."

A charming acquaintance!

The Countess sat down on a bench, and the bandit placed himself beside her. As for me, no one asked me to sit down.

"And where are you going this way, in the middle of the night?"

I made a sign to her not to tell.

"To the ball at the Arad Casino."

Farewell our jewels!

"Then it is very fortunate that you have lost your way. Your Excellencies have no need to continue your

journey. It so happens that we are just giving a ball, and I hope you will accept an invitation. Our *tsiganes* are good musicians: it is the troop of Szalouta. They play splendid *czardas*. Hey, gypsy, play us the air from the 'Beautiful Woman,' and do not let your eyes wander from your violin."

The rascal did not even ask permission. As soon as the musicians had struck up the *czardas*, he threw his dolman over his shoulder, took the Countess by the wrist and drew her into the middle of the room. Another bandit threw himself on Cesarine, who was frightened to death and half-fainting. Ah! she had no need to seek dancers, for she passed from hand to hand and so quickly that her foot hardly ever touched the ground.

The Countess showed what she knew. She danced with as much ardor and as much fire as if she were on the waxed floor of the Arad Casino. I had never seen her more fascinating, more beautiful. Up to that time the Hungarian dance had never seemed to me, at the best, anything but strange. No one before this brigand had ever made me understand what it was. He began by dancing round his partner with a lofty mien, affecting to be very proud of her, looking at her from head to foot, over his shoulder, mingling his cries with the music. When he was weary of this diversion, he placed her in the middle of the room, and it became the lady's turn to dance round her partner. She faced him, whirling around discreetly, with a modest reserve like that of a butterfly hovering above every flower without resting on any. I can say without exaggeration that her feet did not seem to touch the ground. The fellow, with a coquettish gesture, bent toward the Countess as if he meant to kiss her, but he stopped, striking his foot. The enchantress threw her head back proudly, flew off the tips of her toes, and pirouetted to the very end of the room; but the two dancers never took their eyes off each other. Finally, the brigand turned away impatiently, manifesting his anger by dancing furiously before the *tsiganes;* then, suddenly wheeling around, he seized his partner and made her fly round him like a whirlwind.

In the midst of the intoxication of this dance I was uneasy about one thing, and that was lest the wild fellow in his fervor should make some unseemly demonstration toward the Countess. As you may well believe, the temptation was strong. She was entirely in his power, and for a man on whose head a price had long been set, one crime more or less was of small account. At the first impropriety I was resolved to seize one of the guns in the corner and blow out his brains. On my honor, I was firmly resolved to do it.

Happily there was no need of going so far. The dance ended peacefully with the three traditional turns, and the chief of the brigands led his partner to her seat after having kissed her hand very respectfully. He then stepped up to me, and slapping me insolently on the shoulder, said:

"And you, my little old chap, don't you dance?"

Just think of his calling me a little old chap!

"Thanks, I do not know how to dance."

"All right," said he, and returned to the Countess.

"You must excuse us, Excellency. We were not prepared to receive such illustrious guests. Pray accept heartily of what we can offer you. It is little, but it is good."

He alluded to the supper.

The banquet was exceptional. I can well describe it as such. The brigands placed a large *sanapan* full of stewed veal upon the long table. There was no sign of a plate. They ate with their fingers, holding in one hand a piece of bread, and fishing out with the other a slice of meat from the tureen on the point of a knife.

The Countess ate as though she had been fasting for three days. The brigand chief devoted himself to catching for her with his pocket-knife the most appetizing morsels, all of which were floating in a gravy of red pepper, and placing them on her bread. She declared that the dish was savory.

The bandit presumed to remark that I did not eat.

"Eat, little old chap; this dish will fatten you; it is stolen goods!"

Just as I had expected!

"I thank you," I replied; "I could not eat; it is too peppery for me."

"All right," said he, and once more left me alone.

There was no use of even thinking of a glass; the wine was served in wooden cans. According to the customs of the peasantry, Joszi Feketé drank first and, after having wiped his mouth on the loose sleeve of his shirt, presented the can to the Countess. She drank. O, my friends, what an extraordinary woman!

The vagabond then turned toward me and offered me a drink.

"Drink, little old chap" (always the same epithet), "or really you will fall asleep."

"Thank you, I cannot drink. I am following a homœopathic treatment."

"Oh, oh!" cried he, laughing. "*Similia similibus.*" (The rogue knew Latin.) "I, too, am following that treatment, and as wine made me sick yesterday, I am curing myself with wine to-day."

I was perfectly convinced that once drunk they would fall on us. The five emptied a cask among them, and yet, when they rose from the table, not one of them staggered.

While the others were giving supper to the musicians, their chief came to me again.

"My little old chap, you do not eat, you do not drink, you do not dance. How do you amuse yourself? Are you fond of cards?" And at the same time he drew a pack from his pocket.

"Ah!" thought I, "now he wants to know how much money I have with me."

"I don't understand any game of cards," I replied.

"I will teach you one in a moment. It is very easy. See! I place one card here, another there; you cover one, I the other, and the first one of us who draws a court-card wins."

He went on explaining to me from point to point a kind of lansquenet, as if I had not lost two estates at that game! I was obliged, however, to relearn it from

him. What could I do? Sit down and play with him. I had in my pocket a certain amount of copper coin, which I decided to risk and which I spread out upon the table.

"What's that? You do not intend to play with coppers here?"

And he took from his pocket a handful of Austrian zweizigers and ducats. I also had some sweizigers in my pocket. I placed one of them, tremblingly, on a card. It was a court-card, and I won. The thief paid. For nothing in the world would I have dared to pocket that money, so I left it on the table. I won twice, thrice, and each time I left my winnings on the table. The fourth, fifth, sixth time it was still I whom fortune favored. I began to feel excessively warm. My position was dreadful: playing cards with a brigand and winning his money steadily. The seventh time I won again. I had a whole string of zweizigers spread out before me. The cold perspiration ran down my brow. Why had I not the same luck at Pozoni during the sitting of the Diet? I continued to leave my winnings upon the table, while I silently murmured: "Heaven grant that I may lose this money!"

Vain prayer; for the eighth time I won again. This time I certainly thought that I was marked for death. The wretch said to me laughingly:

"You are probably one of the fair Countess's unhappy lovers, for you win outrageously, my little old chap."

He dared to laugh at me! At the ninth turn I was trembling in every limb. I won again. The robber struck a fierce blow on the table, and still laughing, said:

"Listen, little old chap; if you go on at this rate, I shall lose a province in an hour."

He gathered up what remained of his money on the table, and rose. I offered to return him the sum that I had won, but he eyed me from head to foot with the haughtiness of a hidalgo.

"For what do you take me? Put up that money, or I will pitch you out of doors with your zweizigers."

Then I took the whole lot and threw it to the *tsiganes*.

It was only when it was too late that I understood that I had just committed a foolish act; for I had myself declared my own wealth.

The *tsiganes* surrounded me, begging me to let them play the tune I liked best. I got rid of them by sending them to the Countess. The madcap soon made her choice. With her siren's voice she began the popular air:

"My home is in the desert
In winter and in summer."

She sang so well and with such irresistible charm that I fancied myself in my box at the Pesth Casino, and set to work to applaud her. The brigand chief applauded also, and was kind enough, in his turn, to regale us with a tune. He drew out a flute and played some rustic melody. What it was I do not remember.

"It is your turn now, my little old chap. Sing us something."

This demand embarrassed me. How could I sing when I was in a state of mortal anguish?

"I do not know how to sing," I replied.

Generally the Countess laughed at me if I happened unconsciously to hum a few bars from some opera, in my frightful peacock voice. But this time, speaking to me in French, she begged me to sing, if I did not wish, by my refusal, to expose us all to some insult.

This request was all that was wanting to deprive me of the remainder of my confidence. What could I do? With trembling heart and choking voice I began to sing laboriously. For a moment the Countess listened to me with great composure, but in attacking the verse

"With thee alone I can be happy,"

I made an effort to raise my voice, when it broke so ludicrously that she burst out laughing. The whole band followed suit, so much so that at the end I did as the others, although I had not the slightest wish to imitate them.

The dance began again. The Countess was indefatigable. She whirled about until daylight. When the sun smote the window-panes, she thanked the brigand for the pleasure he had given her and begged him to have her carriage prepared, so that she might continue her journey.

Now, surely, our last hour had come!

Joszi Feketé went out, woke up the coachman and the footman, had the horses harnessed, and came back to tell us that everything was ready. Then I felt sure that he intended to assassinate us on the road.

I got back into the carriage with more fear than I had got out of it. The most suspicious thing to me was that I had not been asked for my pocket-book.

The bandit chief mounted his horse and accompanied us as far as the high road, keeping always by the carriage-door. On arriving there he showed us our way, took off his hat, wished us much pleasure and disappeared.

I did not feel safe until we had reached Zernid. Then only I reproached the Countess and told her that, if my presence had not restrained the rascals, this adventure might have had the most frightful end for her.

She listened to my observations patiently, and by way of reply asked:

"Apropos, dear Baron, are you not sleepy?"

"No," I answered curtly.

"Then sing me the end of that tune that you could not finish last night."

"In that case I am sleepy."

All along the road I made myself happy by dreaming of the favors that the Countess would have to lavish on me to buy my silence about this escapade. However, we had scarcely arrived at Arad and she had not yet crossed the passageway from the hotel-door to her room before she had already related the whole story to three persons. When we entered the ball-room, every one knew of it.

That did not prevent her from being the queen of the ball, as she had counted on being, or else why should

she have come, seeing that she did not dance once? To those who invited her she replied that she was tired. I should think so! She had danced eighteen *czardas* from midnight to morning. I, who had not moved, could scarcely keep on my legs.

I rushed to the gaming-rooms, saying to myself: "Now that fortune has come to you, press her to your heart." At one table they were playing lansquenet. "Away with you!" I cried. "I have had a wonderful run of luck to-day at this game!" Yes, I was in for a thousand florins. Fortune only pursues me when she sees that she terrifies me.

Six months later, I took up a newspaper one day and read in it that the famous brigand Joszi Feketé, condemned to death by a court-martial, had been executed.

I carried this interesting paper to the Countess and showed her the news.

"Ah!" said she, when she had finished reading the account, "he was such a good dancer!"

Stories in which the fate of a life is made to hang upon the outcome of a game of chess, are not uncommon; but, as the readers of ROMANCE can testify, they are almost always full of interest. Here is one which is probably among the most powerful ever written. It is also from the magic pen of Maurice Jokai, and is translated from the Hungarian for ROMANCE by J. Murray Mitchell.

THE SENTENCE OF MEHEMED.

AHMANZADE MEHEMED, the Sirdar of the auxiliary troops of Tunisi, was known on account of the rigorous discipline that he exercised over his soldiers. "It is not the enemy you must fear, but me," he would often remark to the young soldiers, who came to increase the ranks. Thus his army was an army of heroes, who had no fear on the battle-field, but who trembled in the presence of their leader.

The first campaign in which they fought was at Albania, in the battle against the rebel Greeks, and on that occasion Mehemed's men proved themselves efficient. It happened that Mehemed one day ordered eight soldiers to remain in ambush at the "five fountains" of Arta, at which point the Greeks were likely to open their attack. They were to stop any one who should try to pass by, and they were strictly cautioned not to dismount or fall asleep. The soldiers executed with exactness all their instructions.

A vehicle which attempted, toward midnight, to cross the line unobserved, was discovered and stopped. The man who had charge of the oxen which drew it ran away, abandoning his wagon. On this wagon was a barrel. It was easy to ascertain what the barrel contained, even without dismounting, and without falling asleep. You only had to open the bunghole to smell the pleasant odor of liquor escaping from it. And it must have been an excellent liquor, compounded largely of figs and dry raisins. The *Giaurri* (Christians) undoubtedly knew what was good.

The soldiers had not been forbidden, if they seized

liquor, to drink it. And really they did not drink directly from the barrel; they merely sunk bulrushes in it, through which they sipped the sweet and intoxicating liquid. Was it not harmless to sip with such thin rushes? One could scarcely call that drinking! But justly does the Prophet remark that wine is a deceitful beverage, in which the devil has had his hand, since this drink brings men to every evil.

First, the soldiers asked each other why they should sit in their hard saddles, when the grass made such a soft bed on the ground. And if they lay there for only a short while, nobody would know it: they could tie the horses to the wagon, and these certainly could tell no tales. After they had dismounted, the infernal drink persuaded them that it was a useless task for eight men to remain on guard; four would suffice, and the rest could sleep. To the four men who were to keep awake, the waiting for their turn seemed too long, and they agreed that two might sleep, while the other two remained true to the orders.

Maruf and Sefer were the two designated to watch for the rest.

"Do you know," said Sefer to his friend, "do you know that one man is of the same value in this case as two? It will do just as well if only one of us watches. Do you not agree?"

Maruf assented.

"I propose," continued Sefer, "that we play a game of chess: the loser will have to watch, and the winner may sleep!"

Maruf accepted the conditions.

The two Bedouins prepared the ground in front of where they stood, and with their spears they traced a square, dividing it into sixty-four smaller squares. Then they substituted for the regular pawns the fruits of the woods. The wild pears became kings, the apples queens, the castles were represented by acorns, the bishops by rose-hips, the knights by nuts and the pawns by berries. The men thus provided, the game began by the light of the camp-fire.

At first, Sefer held the advantage, but that inebriating drink overcame him, little by little, so that he was not in condition to distinguish his pawns. He lost his queen, and was very near being checkmated.

"Sefer, you are in a bad mess," remarked Maruf when he saw that the game was in his hands.

"You are right. I am as sleepy as the sea when it is calm."

"You are losing the game."

"I can see that, too!"

"Well, lie down, in the name of Allah. I will watch for you."

Sefer shook his friend's hand in grateful acknowledgment of the sacrifice, and he thought he spoke to him, but he only dreamed it, for he fell asleep immediately.

Maruf, on the contrary, kept his eyes open, and leaning on his gun, he looked at his sleeping companions. But that devilish drink began to murmur softly:

"Why do you not sit down? You could see just as well!"

As soon as he was seated, Satan again began to tempt him.

"Why do you tire your eyes? If you shut one of them, you will see with the other just as well as with both."

Maruf reflected that, if his eyes were closed, his ears were open, and that he would be ready to start at the smallest danger that might threaten his companions and himself. And with the firm purpose of not falling asleep, he slumbered as heavily as the rest.

In the mean time, the hidden Greeks came all of a sudden upon the sleeping men, untied the horses of the Turks and would certainly have killed them, had not Maruf's horse, as though he foresaw the danger, begun to neigh. The first to awaken was Maruf, and in a few moments the rest were ready. They ran to get their arms and stood on the defence, now fully awake and sober.

They threw themselves on the enemy; but it was of no avail. The Greeks had mounted the horses and

laughed at the Turks, who endeavored to overcome them on foot.

Maruf's horse alone would not submit to the Greek who had mounted him, and began to rear and plunge until he had succeeded in throwing the rider. He then kicked him and returned to his owner.

Eight men had one horse left among them. What was Mehemed going to say? The Bedouins, yet young, were cast down at the thought of death. They knew their leader would have no pity for them; and still sadder were they at the loss of their beloved horses. Of what use is a man without a horse?

Mortally worried at the punishment they expected, they returned to headquarters, and, brought face to face with Ahmanzade, they narrated what had happened; how they had disobeyed his orders, how they had fallen asleep after drinking the liquor, how the last two watchmen had played chess, and finally how they had lost their horses. Ahmanzade was not in the habit of making a display of passion when he had to pass sentence. In his immovable face, no one could read whether he decreed life or death.

"As for eight men there remains only one horse," he remarked, "you will agree with me, that there are seven of you too many. I have never read in the Koran nor in the Azorat that eight men should ride one horse, and as you are such good players, sit down and let skill decide which of you is to be the man who is to have the one horse. All the others are sentenced to die."

Having said this, Ahmanzade had four chess-boards brought in, for the Turks are in the habit of carrying chess-boards with them, even in war. As soon as the men were arranged, he ordered the Bedouins to begin their play.

Twelve of the best marksmen were ready with their rifles to shoot the losers. Two or three gave in at once to their stronger adversaries; in others, despair battled with craftiness against the advantage of their more skilful opponents, and the former would win when the latter had victory in their hands.

The losers were immediately removed, and the noise of several shots indicated that they had ceased to exist.

The first tilt was over. Four had lost, four were winners. These last were paired. New hopes and new fears. A danger would pass unobserved, and he who had made the error would raise a cry which was his death-sentence.

Again two lost, and again two were shot. And now only two remained—Maruf and Sefer. They found themselves, as they had been before, in front of the camp-fire. They were the best players. They began the game with a good deal of caution, resting their foreheads on the palms of their hands, thoughtfully calculating every move, without hesitating but without hurrying.

For a long while neither of the two succeeded in obtaining an advantage; for each gain there was an equal sacrifice.

The spectators nod to each other when either one makes a brilliant move. Little by little, the number of pawns on the chess-board diminishes; the main figures lie scattered to the right and to the left; the situation becomes plainer; a few more moves, and Sefer will lose his castle!

Maruf has one more castle than his adversary, and this means a good deal at the present stage of the game. The crowd believes that the game is in his hands.

All of a sudden, great drops of sweat cover the forehead of Maruf—a fear overtakes him, he trembles through all his body. He has noticed that, if his adversary sacrifices his queen instead of the castle, he can checkmate him with the bishop. Would Sefer see that move? On that depends life and death!

Sefer looks at the chess-board for a long while; his looks betray that he has seen the move that will save him. But he does not touch the men, and he seems to hesitate.

"Maruf," he asks all of a sudden, "how many children have you at home?"

"Four," is the answer that comes from trembling lips.

"You have a good wife?"

"An excellent wife," answers Maruf with a sigh.

Sefer passes a hand over his face, and begins to murmur as though he were praying.

Then he asks for water; he washes his eyes, his hands,—first the left hand, then the right hand. Unseen, two guardian angels watch ever by those who pray.

"Yesterday night you gave me the game so that I might sleep," he says.

Maruf does not answer, but bows his head in assent.

"You have always been a good friend of mine, Maruf."

Maruf lets his head drop on his breast entirely overcome. Sefer then slowly lifts his hand to the chess-board and makes a move, not with the queen, but with the castle.

"Checkmated!" you hear murmured on all sides. Maruf has won, and Sefer lost. Sefer rises quietly, offers his hand for the last time to his friend Maruf, who seems nailed to his place, and signals to the soldiers to be ready. Two seconds later a shot announces that the tournament is over.

But Maruf does not stir. With intent eye he looks at the board, and with trembling hand he puts the pawns in their places, but like one who does not know which are the places assigned to them. The other men are confused with the pawns; the white with the black.

"Get up," exclaimed Ahmanzade. "Ride your horse, you are to live!"

The man, however, does not move, and continues with his vacant stare to arrange the chess-board, making strange moves with the figures.

"What an absurdity!" he exclaims, laughing recklessly. "One has a turban, and the other a horse's head!"

"Pick him up," orders Mehemed. And two soldiers lift him. Maruf, however, continued to laugh with a lunatic's laugh. Heaven, earth and men were now alike unknown to him.

During the last move he had become mad.

An important period in the evolution of a human being from comparative barbarism to civilization is covered in this brilliant story by Geraldine Bonner. It first appeared in the New York *Tribune*.

MISS ESPERANZA O'SHEA.

It was just on the stroke of nine. The lower balcony of the Casino was crowded, and even on the broad stretch of stone pavement the chairs were so close that the passer-by had to pick his way, politely mindful of women's trains and men's feet. Outside the sea wall the ocean lay long and level, part of it paled by moonlight, and here and there on its darker expanse specked with the small, steady lights of anchored yachts. The scene was picturesque—a black arch spanning a moonlit roadway, a gate-tower, dark against the sky, with a round, bright moon shining over its shoulder, a glimmering of white waves seething about broken rocks. From the corner of the balcony where the musicians sat floated the strains of Wolfram's "Song to the Evening Star," with its undertone of ineffable, piercing sadness.

It was just at this propitious moment that the crowd at the far end of the balcony became aware that the crowd at the end near the main entrance were enjoying a sensation. There was a rustle of crushed silk as the women moved in their chairs, a universal turning of heads, a raising of girls' lorgnettes, an adjusting of men's glasses, a murmurous intermingling of queries, and then a running fire of comment, not too carefully suppressed—"Well, did you ever! Who are they, for pity sake? Has she ever been here before? Where are they from? Did you say it was an actress?" And all the heads slowly revolved on the craned necks as all the eyes turned to follow three new arrivals walk down the balcony.

Miss Esperanza O'Shea had often been stared at, but never to this extent. As a Californian, a beauty and an heiress, she had known what it was to be looked upon

with curiosity, admiration and envy. But she had never before left her native State, hence she had never been subjected to the broad, bold, unwinking stare of the cultured East. Nevertheless she bore it with the impassive aplomb of one born and bred in its fierce, bright glare, and, at the head of the family, walked slowly down the long veranda, the little cortége trotting at her heels, as it had done, figuratively speaking, ever since she had been old enough to walk at all.

Miss O'Shea invariably led her family in all things. She had done so since her tenderest years. Her papa, a big, florid, grizzled man, in a high gray hat and a loosely hanging gray suit, always obeyed Esperanza. As to her mamma, she was a Mexican, and though she had lived for twenty years under the shadow of our hospitable flag, she had never been able to master the intricacies of our complicated language, and could therefore hardly be expected to guide the steps of her extremely self-confident daughter.

Close upon the musicians Miss O'Shea paused, her darkly circled eyes falling upon three vacant chairs. She indicated them with the gesture of one used to command, and her obedient parents silently seated themselves. Mr. O'Shea took off his hat, ran a fat, short-fingered hand through his grizzled hair and respired the sea-air, then turned his eyes inward and made no sound. Mrs. O'Shea, whom the lights revealed to be a dark, fat, waistless, formless lady, with ink-black hair and a mustache, the possession of which would have made the heart of a sophomore sing, indulged in soft Spanish mutterings and went to sleep with the promptitude of one who knows what is expected of a well-trained Spanish mother. Miss O'Shea alone remained alert and watchful, and gave the crowd stare for stare.

It was not surprising that a crowd should stare at this brilliant young lady. She was made up with an open and unblushing frankness that bespoke ignorance of the popular prejudice against this form of decoration. Rice powder was thick on the bridge of her nose. There was pink on her cheeks and red on her lips. Her hair,

curled down to her eyebrows, was bleached a bright bronze-red; she was tall and well formed, with square, broad shoulders and a tiny waist. Her foot, peeping from the hem of her skirt in a white kid slipper worked with gold, was by no means small. Neither were her hands, but they were white as milk, beautifully shaped and covered with superb rings. As for her dress, it was an indescribably gorgeous creation of white and gold, with a bodice of dead white suéde braided from neck to waistline in gold arabesques. But neither paint, powder nor bad dressing could hide that she was handsome and young.

"Where on earth has she come from?" breathed the crowd, with the wide eyes of lively amazement.

Had this query been put directly to Miss O'Shea, she would have answered with unruffled good humor that she had come straight from California for the purpose of "having a good time." Her father, too, had thought that she ought to have a good time, she would have continued with the charming frankness of eighteen—not a New York or Boston or even a Chicago eighteen, but a Californa eighteen, an eighteen that had gleaned its experience of men and manners from life on a ranch near Merced, varied during the last two years by winters in the town-house in Sacramento.

After a serious perusal of the papers, Esperanza O'Shea had come to the conclusion that Narragansett Pier was the best place to go in pursuit of the vaguely specified good time. Moreover, it appeared to be a place where a dazzling wardrobe would meet with an intelligent appreciation. At breakfast one morning Esperanza announced her intention of spending the summer there.

"All right, Espy," said Mr. O'Shea, "I'll telegraph for rooms to-day."

"Si si," murmured the Señora O'Shea, raising the heavy lids that once shaded the finest eyes in Mexico, and casting a sleepy glance at her daughter; "yez, cettanly, of cos," and then once more she relapsed into smiling somnolence.

The wardrobe did its work at Narragansett Pier, if its work was to make its wearer stared at, talked about, and grudgingly admired. It was certainly a remarkable one. In a place of remarkable wardrobes it made its mark, had its own niche with the other wardrobes, and its share in the day's talk. Miss O'Shea wore it with an impassive front, and greatly enjoyed the sensation it created. As a wardrobe to be stared at it was a brilliant success. On its own ground none of the other wardrobes could compare with it. Arrayed in one of its masterpieces no one was as conspicuous, no one as gorgeous, no one, truth to tell, despite the powder and the paint, was as handsome as Esperanza O'Shea.

But there is admiration and admiration. The unsophisticated Esperanza had not grasped this fact. That the glances and stares of one of the most ill-bred crowds in the country were not all admiring, did not penetrate her simple mind for some time. That people were slow in extending the right hand of fellowship to her, she did feel with a slowly dawning, hurt surprise. It never occurred to her that any one could possibly object to making the acquaintance of a young lady because she had red-gold hair when nature meant her to have dark brown, or plastered her lips with a crimson glue for all the world to see.

But Eastern people were not very friendly. She announced this with the customary candor of the Californian to a lady who sat next her at table. The lady said: "No, they are not expansive," and then smiled and drifted out of the dining-room, and afterward proved to be one of the least expansive of the people toward whom Esperanza made friendly overtures.

Yes, they were very stiff. She sat in the Casino every evening with her papa and her mamma, and nobody came to talk to her. Up in the tower, with its stone supports black against the horizon, the red electric lights showed friendly, cheerful, merry people sitting in groups, and sometimes sipping cool drinks at the little round tables. Their laughter floated down and mingled with the faint washing of the waves on the

rocks. They undoubtedly were having a good time. So were the people on the balcony and the paved terrace, drawn together in little gay, chattering parties, from which the breeze bore scraps of sentences and the light, high laughter of women. Esperanza envied them with the pent-up intensity of her eighteen years. Silent, between her silent parents, she looked at the gay groups around her with her eyes full of a childish and pathetically candid envy.

"Don't seem to me, Espy," said her father, suddenly, "as if you were having such a rattling good time."

"Well, not exactly, popper," she said, heaving up a great sigh from the bottom of her pensively covetous heart, "but maybe I'll get there later."

The next evening the O'Shea party resolved to try a change, and ascended to the tower. It was even gayer than usual. Groups sat about at the round tables, sipping chilled liquids in tall tumblers, in which two blackberries, a raspberry and a slice of lemon lay on the top of the cracked ice. A long steam yacht, which had run into port a few hours before, was now only vaguely distinguishable, but its lights pierced the darkness, moving with the moving swells. Its blue-coated, white-trousered yachtmen roamed the Casino, occasionally stopping to greet friends.

At ten o'clock the silent O'Sheas picked up their wraps and departed for their hotel, which was close by the Casino. But as they emerged from that building Esperanza, who had been struggling with her long cloak of white silk, discovered that she had carried away the cape of the lady who had sat next her. She remembered having seen it on the chair beside her and recollected throwing her own cloak over it. Calling to her parents to go on, that she had forgotten something and would join them directly, she hurried back to the tower. But the lady and her friends had already gone.

Not finding its owner, Esperanza gave the cape to one of the waiters loitering about, then slowly retraced her steps toward the corridor. There were only a few people now left in the tower and the gallery, and these were

mostly couples who had tucked themselves away in corners and were enjoying murmured conversation. Miss O'Shea, smiling to herself, looked over the road to see if she could catch a glimpse of her parents, then trailed her long skirts of pale blue brocade along the passage to the stairhead.

As she reached this, a quick step on the veranda outside announced the approach of a man. Miss O'Shea dreamily speculated that he must have seen her as she walked down the gallery. With her fingers extended for the balustrade, she turned and saw him enter, then pause and look at her. He was a tall, handsome man, in the dark blue coat, white duck trousers and blue peaked cap of a yachtsman. He wore eyeglasses, and looked somewhere in the vicinity of thirty. His face, as he stood there looking at her, left upon her memory a lasting impression.

Then, as she extended her foot for the first step, he took off his hat and said, smiling:

"How do you do? Isn't it a lovely evening?"

She was startled and made vaguely uncomfortable by this unexpected address. Looking at him in frank astonishment, she murmured a hesitating, "Yes, lovely," and was about to continue her descent when he drew a step closer and said:

"Don't go back yet. Let's go into the tower and have an absinthe frappé."

Miss O'Shea stopped on the step and made no further attempt to descend. The words themselves made little impression on her. She had seen men and women this very evening sitting in the tower drinking absinthe frappé, crême de menthe and cobblers. In the manner of the man lay the sting. Even Miss O'Shea, with her limited range of experience and her beautiful belief in mankind's invariably chivalrous intention, felt it.

And then she forgot the little, the very little, training she had ever received, forgot what Dr. Watts tells us of our hands not being made for the purpose of tearing out each other's eyes, forgot that the only weapon society allows a lady is her tongue, forgot, indeed, what

society says a lady is and what it maintains she should always be, and a great wave of fury swept over her. The fiery blood of Indian and Spaniard rushed into her face, the fierce spirit of her Castilian forefathers who had conquered a world with Cortez, burst once more into life. With the closed fan in her hand she struck the smiling face a stinging blow. The fan-sticks snapped, the bronzed skin beneath them crimsoned. Smothering a furious ejaculation, the man threw a hand up over his cheek and eye, and Miss O'Shea, panting and darkly flushed, swept down the stairs.

Then as she hurriedly descended, he, smarting with pain, his anger surging, hurled himself on the balustrade and looked over at her. All he saw was the top of her red-gold head, the wavering pulse of diamonds that trembled through her hair, the long sweep of her pale-blue, trailing dress, the ivory nape of her neck where the pearl necklace fastened with a sapphire clasp. The next moment she had passed out of sight, and he heard her rapid, decisive step on the balcony below.

He turned back, intending to watch her from the upper veranda, but in the doorway met a friend who accosted him with a jocular:

"Hullo, Beverwyk, what have you been running into?"

"Oh, I turned suddenly to look at that woman just go down the stairs and ran into that door; thought both doors were open—hurts like the devil," returned the other glibly.

And arm-in-arm they passed down the veranda, murmuring together and laughing.

When Miss O'Shea got back to her hotel her breath had regained its usual evenness, her color had gone down, but her eyes were brilliant under their lowered lids. Her father sat in the darkened sitting-room in his shirt-sleeves with his high hat on—his habitual costume when at ease in the house. When she came in, tossed her cloak on a chair, and stood silently pulling off her gloves, he regarded her for a moment or two, then said, as if the idea had just struck him:

"Where've you been all this time?"

"Oh, I just went back to return that lady's cape. I gave it to a waiter. It was all right." She tore off her gloves, and stretched and bent her plump fingers, turning round her rings.

"Look here, pop," she said, twisting the "marquise" on her little finger back into place, "I guess we'd better leave this place."

"Well, I guess so, too," said the old man, mildly. "Guess you don't like it much, Espy?"

"I don't belong here," she said, with a sort of rough shyness. "I'm different."

The old man extended his hand and drew her up to him.

"You'll do," he said, fondly patting the velvety hand.

"May be I will for you," she answered, with the same air of dogged embarrassment, "but I'm too different. It's not comfortable."

Whether Mr. O'Shea understood or not, he queried no further. He patted the smooth hand in silence, then he said:

"Well—what do you want to do?"

"I want to go to Europe for a long time—a year. I want to know things. I don't want to be so different."

"Well, now, Espy," said the old man deprecatingly; then, as two soft arms went round his neck, he added: "But you can go if you want."

Two weeks later the O'Shea family sailed from New York on the Umbria.

Once arrived in the effete monarchies, Miss Esperanza O'Shea went seriously, if a little blindly, to work to reconstruct herself. She went to a school in Paris and stayed there all winter, studying hard. Her companions showed no surprise at her presence. They had heard that she was an American from California, which in the effete monarchies explains many things. In their refining society Miss O'Shea was gradually restored to her original self. Her red-gold locks went through as many changes of hue as the dying dolphin, but at length arrived safely on the homeward path to the deep dark

brown of nature. She put away all the little pots of red and white that had made her dressing-table look like that of an old belle who dies hard. A very demure phœnix began to rise from the ashes of the once gorgeous Esperanza O'Shea.

With the native shrewdness of the women of the West, who make their own positions and fight their own fortunes, she was quick to see and to adopt the style and manners of the young girls about her. By the spring the elaborate beauty who had created a sensation at the Narragansett Casino had passed from phase to phase of a subduing process, and, compared to her old self, was as a wren to a peacock. Instead of looking like a woman of thirty, she now looked like what she was—a girl of twenty—a tall, ivory-pale, velvet-eyed girl, with a thick coil of smooth, uncurled dark hair, and a stately carriage, such as romance-writers are fond of ascribing to princesses. The Parisians thought her very foreign and picturesque. She looked like Dona Sol or Elvira—all she wanted was the dusky droop of the mantilla shadowing the warm pallor of her cheeks, a black curl on her temple, a red rose in her hair.

The elaborating process did not finish at Paris. Miss O'Shea took her family and a governess traveling. They "did" Europe, with couriers and libraries of books of travel, and a governess, who, in some embarrassment, called herself "a companion." They studied art in Italy and music in Germany. The governess was almost worked to death, but the pupil, insatiable in her desire to be as ornate as the young person of any place or any country, would permit no respite. They met a good many people too. Miss O'Shea began to be spoken of as the great beauty and heiress of the American colonies of different capitals. French noblemen, whom she had never seen, wrote to her offering to her their hearts, hands and coronets. English noblemen followed her about, meditating proposals, but German noblemen generally proposed to her on the first meeting. Before her return to New York, after a three years' absence, her coming was heralded with a flourish

of newspaper trumpets, that crowded into small type in an obscure corner the arrival of Herr Glumberg, the most eminent of German anthropologists, who crossed on the same steamer.

As the immortal Begum would say, the O'Sheas were "took up" in New York. Our patriotic metropolis is always glad to know any one who has met with the approval of the effete monarchies. It had heard of the foreign noblemen, and it immediately proceeded to light its taper before the same shrine. Miss O'Shea was pronounced a very wonderful young woman, perfect in her style, distingué, singularly simple, sweet and fine, and true. Such a dazzling creature had never before come out of the West. She knew everything, spoke half-a-dozen languages, played four musical instruments. Rumor wasn't sure that she didn't play two at the same time. Her parents came in for a little of the general approbation. Society characterized Mrs. O'Shea as a most cultivated woman, and when she fell asleep before its eyes, said that "her manner was marked by a truly Southern repose."

But the crown of the O'Sheas' glory was reached when it became evident that Beverwyk Van Duyvil had succumbed to the charms of the beautiful Esperanza. To understand what this really meant one ought to know that Beverwyk Van Duyvil was the last of the Van Duyvils—that illustrious family which, tradition says, was one of the few families that before settling in New Amsterdam enjoyed distinction in the mother-country. The Van Duyvils had never been butchers or bakers, or even shoemakers. There was, therefore, nothing left for them to be but gentlemen of leisure or governors.

The last representative of this honorable line was very rich, very much of a person, not a german-leader or a ball-organizer, but a man of parts and positions. He had never so far forgotten the glory of the Van Duyvils as to pay his addresses to the scions of any but first families in Boston and Philadelphia. New York women did not meet with his approbation. And now he sighed at a pair of Californian feet that had once

run bare and brown on the dusty by-roads about Merced.

Even old O'Shea was flattered in his pride. His sturdy, democratic heart could not subdue a throb of vanity when he thought that the sole survivor of the house of O'Shea—recently discovered to be descended from the kings of Waterford—should mate with the last representative of the house of Van Duyvil. The only person who remained haughtily indifferent was the young lady herself. She was distant and cold to her suitor, rarely spoke of him, made excuses not to see him, was out when he called. It would not have been strange if Beverwyk Van Duyvil had felt discouraged by the attitude of his lady fair. But to be a Van Duyvil means more things than to be merely great and illustrious. It means to possess a self-confidence that earthquakes cannot shake. That the young lady was cold and unresponsive proved to Beverwyk Van Duyvil that she was a trifle more original than the scions of the first families whom he had heretofore honored with his regard. It was meet that a future Van Duyvil should hold herself high.

When he finally asked her to marry him, this most difficult task was accomplished with truly graceful tact and admirable aplomb. Beverwyk Van Duyvil proposed, as he did everything else, with perfectly finished grace. It must be admitted that, of the two, the descendant of the lordly Dutchman was much more self-possessed and agreeable than the descendant of the Milesian Kings. Miss Esperanza O'Shea received the flattering offer in ungracious and frowning silence, which may be peculiar to kings, but is not accounted charming in beautiful young Californians. Then, as Van Duyvil attempted to take her hand and press it gently between his own, she abruptly withdrew the member, and fixing on him a pair of darkly angry eyes, said: "I will send you your answer to-morrow." And without waiting for him to reply, she rose and walked away, not looking back, leaving him to follow with his eyes her graceful figure as she passed down the long

rooms, and to sit silent, absently drawing his gloves through his hand in pleasing meditations.

The next afternoon, when Beverwyk arrived from down-town in his apartments, he found a package awaiting him. It was long and narrow, wrapped in paper, and directed in the small, round hand of Miss O'Shea. He opened it, puzzled. From the unrolled paper dropped a fan of pale-blue, painted gauze, with four of its sticks snapped in two. Round the broken sticks was twisted a piece of paper, on which was written:

"For the second time Mr. Van Duyvil has made a mistake. ESPERANZA O'SHEA."

The following tragic tale, which has been written for ROMANCE by Dr. Charles Sterk, is vouched for by its author as true. "Sophie Petrowitch" and her child are now living in Paris.

THE FATE OF A NIHILIST.

IT was not uncommon, at our little *pension* in Geneva, to meet mysterious characters. French royalists, Russian nihilists and German socialists were all to be found there, and we were never surprised at the eccentric appearance of anybody.

However, we had seldom encountered so sad-looking a man as one day when we were going to enjoy a ball in the evening, and a number of strangers had come to the *pension* for supper. Among these was a tall, blond fellow, with Polish features, and the most despairing expression that I have ever beheld. His face was as pale as death. He seemed indifferent to everything that passed before him, and ate what was served to him in a mechanical, absent-minded way, which revealed clearly that his thoughts were far away.

After the meal was over, most of us sought the piazzas. It was perhaps nine o'clock when, glancing into the ball-room, which had been evolved from the dining-hall, I saw our hostess, Madame M., an excellent woman, talking earnestly with the pale-faced stranger. She caught my eye, and, advancing rapidly toward me with her companion, introduced him to me most cordially as M. Iwan Petrowitch from Warsaw.

After we had been chatting for awhile on the sofa, he asked me to go out on the veranda with him, where we could be more by ourselves. There we sat down, and he lighted a cigarette. At first he was silent. At last he murmured: "My God! how it is possible that all those people can be so gay and happy, while I——" He stopped, puffed the smoke of his cigarette into the air, and drummed nervously with his hand on the rail of the veranda. At last he drew a photograph from his pocket,

looked intently at it, heaved a sigh, and then handed it silently to me. I looked at it attentively. It was the picture of a very beautiful young woman with a babe in her arms.

"A very charming picture," I said. "May I ask who they are?"

For an instant his great hollow eyes looked keenly into mine, and then he said, grasping my hand:

"I believe I can confide in you. I am sorely in need of a friend to whom I can not only pour out my overburdened heart, but who in case of need will stand by me and protect those I love. Can you and will you do all this?"

On my warm assurance, he went on: "Then listen. I was studying medicine at Warsaw, and though not affluent, I possessed enough of worldly goods to finish my studies and to live comfortably.

"After I had studied two years, I made the acquaintance of a fellow-student, Sophie S., the daughter of a Polish nobleman, who lost the greater part of his fortune during the late rebellion. It would be futile to describe her; you saw her picture, but what you could not see there is that she has the loveliest, sweetest character of any woman I ever met. I loved her. How could I help it? She confessed that she loved me, and we were married.

"Why should I attempt to give you an idea of my happiness? Such happiness cannot be pictured; it was simply perfect. In the morning we went to the clinics together, and when at evening we came home, she filled our little abode with sunshine.

"We lived for our studies, and did not mingle with the world. With the exception of a few devoted friends, we rarely saw anybody. Sometimes when some of those friends called, the sufferings of our poor, abused fatherland were discussed, but though we felt keenly its abasement, we were not deeply interested in politics.

"Alas! why could not our innocent happiness last forever?

"One evening, returning late from a party, which one

of our friends had given in celebration of his graduation, we saw, issuing from the prison-gate, a gang of convicts bound to Siberia.

"There were about forty of these wretches, men and women, chained together, and surrounded by a guard of grim, cruel Cossacks, who with their long lances pushed the stragglers forward, as if they were driving so many cattle. We two stood breathlessly still, close against the houses, until the dread midnight procession should have passed. You must know that the government, fearing an outbreak of indignation and rebellion, does its devilish work in the dark. Among the prisoners was a young woman, who with disheveled hair, a picture of intense agony, held a babe in her arms. One hand was chained, and she was pushed forward by the relentless Cossack. She fell on her knees and besought the officer to unchain her, lest she should have to drop the babe. The officer, uttering a curse, told her to get up, and as she did not immediately obey, a Cossack pulled her up by the hair, with such diabolical force, that the poor woman uttered a piercing shriek and her babe fell from her arm to the hard pavement. Its skull was broken. A moment afterward it was a corpse! A Cossack rushed back with it to the prison, but the procession moved on; the mother tearing her hair in a frenzy of despair.

"'Another victim of the Satanic tyranny of the Czar,' I whispered, horror-struck, but Sophie clung to my arm and pale as a ghost, whispered, 'Hush!'

"That moment Nihilism had gained two ardent devotees! We met our friends in our rooms often after this, and ways and means of liberating our country from the iron grasp of the tyrant were discussed in whispers, for fear of detection by the omnipresent spies of the Czar.

"Meanwhile our first baby was born. How ardently I prayed, bending over the cradle of my child! How imploringly I besought God's blessing and protection upon this boy, born in a country where happiness is unknown, where peace is an illusion! We were very

happy in this new joy, but our blessedness was of short duration.

"One night, when the baby was asleep and Sophie and I were chatting together, a friend rushed breathlessly into my room and exclaimed:

"'Iwan, quick! put on this disguise and flee over the frontier! Petrow has just been arrested. He has papers on his person which implicate you. For God's sake, be quick! the bloodhounds will soon be here!'

"Courageous Sophie helped me to put on my disguise, placed a roll of bills in my hand, and, telling me to be brave and to flee to Geneva, she kissed me good-bye, her tears moistening my cheeks.

"Disguised as a cattle-driver, I succeeded in passing the frontier and soon reached Geneva. I have been here now for a week, without having heard a word from Sophie. What has happened to her and to my baby? Good God! why did I flee? Surely the police must have searched my home, and though happily no compromising papers were there, the papers found on Petrow are full proof of my participation in Nihilism. What has become of Sophie? Is she arrested? Oh! my God! how the picture of that woman with her baby, dragged by the hair on that fatal night, haunts me! I can stand it no longer. I have resolved to leave for Russia, if I should receive no news to-morrow."

Here his fist came down upon the little table with such force that it shook the piazza.

"I will return into the tiger's den," he continued, "and if Sophie is arrested, I shall rescue her or perish in the attempt.

"Now," he added, breathlessly, "I feel as if a great load had fallen from my heart, since my terrible secret is out. I may trust you, may I not? Oh, if you knew how sorely I need a friend! Will you be that?"

I warmly pressed his hand and exclaimed: "Whatever I can do, I will, so help me God!"

"Oh! thank you," he exclaimed and, springing up, he threw both his arms around my neck and kissed me.

On resuming his seat, he continued very calmly:

"Now listen. If I do not hear anything by to-morrow's mail, I leave in the evening for Warsaw. I shall endeavor to liberate Sophie. If God will, we shall return together, but this is hardly possible. However, I have many friends in Warsaw, and if she has not been carried off already, I think we can liberate her. If she should come here without me, you will protect the poor woman, will you not? And you and your sweet wife will console and love her, and you will tell her how I adored her and my child?"

Here his frame shook; he was sobbing like a child. I laid my hand on his shoulder and whispered: "Iwan, your wife will be my wife's sister; your boy will be my boy's brother. Be assured that I will love both as if they were my own."

"How can I ever thank you?" he exclaimed. "May God reward you, if I cannot!"

He strode up and down the piazza for a moment, and then said:

"When I joined the Nihilists, I made provision for an occurrence like this. I will write a letter to-night to my banker in Paris, telling him of what is about to happen and appointing you as the guardian of my son. If you should never see me again, teach him to love the memory of his father, and tell him," he said, choking with tears, "oh! tell him that I adored him and that I died for his sake!" He shook my hand and hurried off to his room.

Next morning, when I came down to breakfast, Mme. M., pale and with tears in her eyes, handed me a letter and whispered: "May God have mercy on the poor man!"

I hastened back to my room, opened the letter and read:

"In the middle of the night, a despatch was brought to me: 'Sophie arrested.' You know our agreement. I leave on the early express. May Heaven bless my efforts! Once more, be a brother to my wife, a father to my boy. Enclosed is a letter for my banker, which you will use as you deem best. Farewell! God bless you!"

"And you!" I exclaimed, and, falling on my knees, I prayed for him. Never was a more piteous appeal for heavenly mercy offered up to Him who is the Czar of czars.

For a week I did not hear anything from my friend, and, supposing that he had been arrested in his mad attempt, I pictured him in one dungeon, his wife and babe in another, and pitied them from the bottom of my heart.

I had told my wife the sad story, preparing her for the reception of Sophie, in the event that she should be saved, and we were just talking about them and deploring the hopelessness of Iwan's attempt, when a waiter entered with a card. Handing it to me, he said: "The lady is in the parlor."

Judge of my surprise! I read "Sophie Petrowitz."

I told the waiter to show the lady to our rooms, and requested my wife to leave us for the first moment alone, but she, with her woman's intuition, did far better, as I found out afterward. She received Sophie herself.

The door opened. A tall, beautiful woman, with blond hair and the bluest eyes I ever saw, stood on the threshold, with a babe in her arms. Without saying a word, my wife rushed toward her, laid her arms caressingly round the woman's neck, kissed her repeatedly, and I heard her softly murmur: "Dear, sweet sister!"

The blue eyes were instantly filled with tears and, kissing my wife, she held out her baby toward me, and, sobbing piteously, exclaimed: "Protection for Iwanowitz!" I took the child in my arms.

My wife led the sobbing woman to the sofa, made her sit down by her side and, laying that magnificent blond head against her bosom, she soothed and petted her, as if she were a baby.

After the first moments of emotion had passed by, the fugitive took some refreshments, and the baby, sound asleep, was placed in my boy's cradle. Sophie Petrowitz then, choking with sobs, told us her thrilling story:

"After Iwan had fled, I was praying for his safety and arranging our few possessions for sudden removal, when a loud knock fell on the door and a harsh, commanding voice exclaimed: 'In the name of the law, open!' I gathered all my courage and opened the door. The officers of the law pushed me rudely aside and wanted to see Iwan. When I replied that he was not at home and that I did not know where he was, they inquired whether I was his wife. I answered in the affirmative. They searched the apartment and finding nothing of any avail to them, they told me to prepare myself, as I must appear at once before the magistrate. Taking my baby in my arms, I followed them, and was, without any further ceremony, lodged in jail. The next morning, I appeared before the magistrate, and as I confessed that the meetings had taken place in our rooms, I, as the wife of a Nihilist, who had shielded him and not denounced him to the government, was convicted of high-treason and condemned to end my life in Siberia. It was terrible. Still, it was a great relief to think that Iwan was not to share our sad fate. I had heard nothing of him, and fondly hoped that he was out of the reach of the tyrant. We were led back to prison, my baby and I, and thrown in a cold, dark dungeon, where I remained half-famished, being scarcely able to nurse my baby. I felt almost glad when one dark night I was taken out of my cell and led to a courtyard, where a great many men and women stood already chained together. I seemed to have been forgotten till the last moment, and as the chain was not long enough to fasten me to it, the officer gave the order that I, with my baby, should march in the centre between the two rows of victims.

"The Cossacks surrounded us, and the officer gave the command to march; the prison-gates opened and were immediately shut behind us. When we had marched in dumb silence the distance of about a block-and-a-half, I suddenly heard, above our heads, a sweet tenor-voice singing the fine serenade of Gounod,

'Quand tu me dis, je t'aime.'

I knew that voice: it was Iwan's. Oh, God! what did he do there! Why did not he leave me to my fate? At first, I was delighted at knowing that he was so near, but I soon trembled at contemplating the dreadful danger to which he exposed himself.

"Good God, what is that! A bomb was thrown from the roof, it exploded before the officer, who fell from his horse. A number of men rushed forward, I do not know from where, and in the pitch-dark night nothing was heard but blows, curses, lamentations. A strong hand pulled me in the confusion into a house, and when the door was shut behind us, a voice whispered: 'Hush! follow me. I act for Iwan.'

"More dead than alive, I followed the man, groping our way in the dark. After we had gone some distance, he whispered, as he opened a bull's-eye lantern and threw down a bag: 'Quick, put on this man's attire.' I obeyed, and with his assistance I was soon transformed into a sailor. My hair was hidden under a woolen bonnet, one of those bonnets with tassels, such as the Neapolitans wear.

"He closed the bull's-eye and we walked on, he enjoining it upon me to hush my baby if he should cry. Thank God, my darling was fast asleep.

"Suddenly I felt a gust of wind. We were standing on the shore of the Vistula, and a boat was lying in wait to receive us. I was pushed in, and without a sound the boat was gliding swiftly over the river. Rain poured down in torrents upon us, but I did not mind. My baby was safe, and though I did not know what had become of Iwan, I felt sure that I should soon see him. The man who had rescued me put a roll of bank-notes into my hand, placed the bag with my clothing before me, and said: 'I must leave you at the first landing. Here is a note from Iwan. Don't fear for him. He will soon join you.' Hardly had he said those blessed words when the boat stopped. We all stepped out; the man vanished, but told me to follow another man, whom he designated. He led me to a little house, where I and my baby were fed, and where we remained by a

blazing fire, until the arrival of the night-train. A woman then told me to follow her. We arrived at the station: she told me to step in, and soon she and I were on our road to the frontier. We arrived in Germany before day-break, and as the alarm probably had not been given then, and it was stormy weather and pitch-dark, we passed unnoticed. At Podgurz, on German soil, we alighted. The woman took me to a house, where I changed my dress and now I read the note from Iwan. 'Darling,' it said, 'go right through to Geneva. Stop at the Pension M—, and ask there for Mr. S—. He will tell you all. He has my instructions. Do not fear for me. I will soon join you. God be with you.'

"I took the first train to Berlin and started from there for Basle. When I alighted at Basle and went into the dining-room to refresh myself and wait there for the next train, a man slipped this note into my hand."

Here she sobbed as if her heart would break and held out a note. "Iwan," she continued, "as this note from a friend tells me, after having rescued me, rushed to our rooms, instead of fleeing from Warsaw,—God only knows why. The officers were on his track, and when they broke open the door, they found him walking up and down the room, hugging a plaster statue of Nicholas I. in his arms and calling upon his little Iwanowitz to smile at him. Iwan was stark-mad!"

Here she gave a piercing shriek and fainted in my wife's arms.

The Czar was revenged.

It is said that the spirit of modern life is evolving in America a type of young man, sure to supersede all others. The representatives of this type are cold to beauty and to grace, unless in a golden setting, and, like "honest Tom" in "Esmond," they have their hearts under such excellent control that "Venus herself without a portion would not cause them to flutter." Here is a story (from *Temple Bar*) of the fine, old-fashioned sort of young man, who recklessly flings fortunes away for the sake of the girl he loves (but gets his reward in due time!) It came from the pen of Mrs. Hungerford ("the Duchess") at about the time when she wrote her first charming stories of "Phyllis" and "Molly Bawn."

MONICA.

To any one coming direct from all the luxury and beauty of the old Court above, naturally this little cottage-room looks small and poverty-stricken; yet there is a pathetic tenderness about it, too, born of a woman's hand—a touch of gentle refinement that shows itself in the masses of Old World flowers, carelessly and artistically put together, that adorn the one table and the two brackets, filling all the tiny apartment with their subtle perfume.

The windows, opening to the ground, are thrown wide open. Outside, the garden lies panting in the sunshine. There is the sad lowing as of many cows in the far distance. All the land lies quivering in its heat. A faint useless little breeze comes lazily into the room, ruffling the ancient curtains that are drawn closely together in a vain effort to exclude the sun.

Poor Mr. Norwood, with a praiseworthy determination to seem quite the contrary, is looking the very picture of misery. He has been dragged from his sanctum and his beloved 'Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs,' to interview, or rather be interviewed by, a fashionable young man fresh from town, who, though his nephew, is to him an utter stranger.

Conversation for the last five minutes has been growing more and more languid. Now it threatens to cease

altogether. The host is at his wits' end, the fashionable young man is looking distinctly bored. It is therefore with a glance full of rapture, and a nobly suppressed sigh of extreme relief, that Mr. Norwood hears a step upon the gravel outside, that comes quickly nearer.

It is—it must be—Monica, to the rescue!

Now one of the windows is darkened: a figure, stepping airily from the bright sunshine beyond to the room within, parts the curtains with both hands, and gazes inquiringly around.

As her glance falls upon the strange young man, it alters from expectation to extreme surprise—not confusion, or embarrassment of any kind, but simple, honest surprise, visitors at the cottage being few and far between, and as a rule exceedingly ill to look at.

The strange young man returns her gaze with generous interest, and a surprise that outdoes her own. For a full half-minute she stands with the curtain held back in either hand, and then she advances slowly.

She is dressed in a gown of Oxford shirting—very plain, very inexpensive. It has a little, full, baby body, that somehow suits wonderfully the grave, childish face above it, with its frame of light brown hair so like the color of an unripe chestnut. Her eyes are blue as the heavens above her; her mouth, a trifle large perhaps, but very serious and very sweet.

"Come here, Monica, and let me make you known to your cousin, George Norwood," says her father very proudly. The pride is all concentrated in his daughter. In his soul he deems a king would be honored by such an introduction.

At this, she comes closer, and places a small, slim hand in her cousin's.

"I should have known, of course," she says, as though following out a certain train of thought. "I heard you had come to the Court."

"You must be good friends with him, Monica," says Mr. Norwood nervously. "He is your only cousin, you know—except Julia."

"Yes";—she is smiling now—"we shall be friends of

course!" Then more directly to the man who is still holding her hand, as though he has actually forgotten it is in his possession, "As my father likes you, it follows that I shall like you, too."

"Ah!" says George Norwood, with an answering smile that renders his face quite beautiful, "then I owe your father a debt of gratitude I shall not easily repay."

Mr. Norwood has been getting nearer and nearer to the door by fine degrees. Monica, without seeming to notice this, says gently:

"Go back to your books, papa. I will take care of—of—my cousin."

At this Mr. Norwood beats a thankful retreat, leaving the two young people alone.

"Why did you hesitate just now?" asks George suddenly. She has seated herself on a very ancient sofa, and is regarding him thoughtfully.

"When?"

"Over my name."

"Because I didn't quite know what to call you. Your being my cousin does not prevent your being a perfect stranger—and a stranger, I suppose, ought to be called Mr. Norwood."

"If you call me that, I shall be unhappy forever," says George Norwood. "Besides, you can't, you know, because I shall certainly never call you anything but Monica."

"Oh! at that rate!" says she, smiling again.

Presently, as he stands upon the hearth-rug, he lifts his eyes and fastens them upon a portrait that hangs above the chimneypiece.

"What a charming face!" he says. "What a complexion—and eyes!"

"Yes, it is lovely! It is my grandmother. Don't you think the mouth and nose like papa's?"

"The very image!" says George Norwood. He doesn't think it a bit, but seeing she plainly expects him to say it, he does his duty like a man. "It is a perfect face! But the eyes—they are your own, surely."

"Are they? Do you know I never look at that

picture without feeling bitter!" She laughs as she says this, in a way that precludes the idea that acrimony of any sort could belong to her. "It was the only thing my grandfather left papa. He made a particular point of it in his will, that it should be given to him. When he had carefully cut him off to a shilling, he bestowed upon him an oil-painting. Wasn't it munificent? The eldest son's portion to be a mere portrait! while the second and third son's children should inherit all!" Then, as remembrance comes to her, she reddens and grows for the first time confused. "I beg your pardon," she says softly; "I had forgotten you were the child of the second son."

"Don't mind about that," says Norwood. "In my eyes too it was a most iniquitous will."

"Papa was very glad to get this portrait of his mother," says Monica hastily. "He adored her. She did all she knew to make grandfather destroy his first will, and leave everything, as was only right, to my father. She gained her point, too, but when she died, he forgot his promise and everything, and betrayed the dead, as you can see." She makes a mournful gesture toward the room that so painfully betrays their poverty.

"My father as the second son was badly treated too," says Norwood, anxious, he hardly knows why, to create a feeling of sympathy between them.

"Not so badly. By leaving the property to you, and Julia, the daughter of his third son, on condition you marry each other, he provided for both the children of the younger sons. For me he did nothing. He never forgave papa's marriage.—You will marry Julia, of course?"

She is regarding him seriously, and he laughs a little and colors beneath her gaze.

"I dare say," he says lightly. "It would seem a pity to throw away ten thousand a year; and if I refuse, she gets all, and I am in the cold. As I am heart-whole, I may as well think about it; that is, if she will have the goodness to accept me."

"She will," says Monica, with a certain meaning in

her tone. "If she refused, she would be left penniless too, it would all go to you, and she is fond of—" she pauses. "I dare say you will get on very well together," she continues hastily. "And as you are heart-whole, as you say, it really cannot much matter."

"What can't matter?"

"Your marrying for money."

"And if I was not quite free—if my heart owned another tie—how then?" asks he, with an anxiety to know her opinion that astonishes even himself.

"Then it would be disgraceful of you, and contemptible," returns she seriously, but without haste. Perhaps she thinks she has spoken too severely, because presently she smiles up at him very softly and kindly. And then, after a little bit, he says good-by to her, and goes out into the gleaming sunshine, and all the way up to the grand old Court (that may, or may not, be his as his will dictates), and into it, he carries, not the face of the cousin who reigns there, and whom it is expedient he should marry, but a soft vision glad with eyes that shine like sapphires, and sunburnt hair, and a smile grave and sweet and full of heavenly tenderness.

. . . . . .

It is a month later. Thirty days—as cruelly short as days will ever be where happiness reigns supreme—have taken to themselves wings and flown away.

It is now high noon; already the day begins to wane. The god of light grows weary. "Tired Nature halts." The streamlets are running wearily, as though fatigued with the exertions of the day, now almost past. "It is the earth's siesta—even the bee flags in his deep and dull monotony."

All the morning George Norwood has toiled assiduously after his cousin at the Court; has followed from greenhouses to conservatories, from conservatories to orchards, the woman he has been taught he must marry, if he wishes to keep up his good fellowship with the world to which he has so long been known. Now, when evening is descending, he has escaped from his duty, and has flung himself with deepest, intensest relief

at the feet of the woman he ought not to marry, with whom indeed marriage will mean social extinction.

He met her half an hour ago in this little shadowy valley, where the dying sunbeams are playing at hide and seek among the branches of the trees, and where a tiny rivulet is lisping and stammering as it runs lazily over its pebbles.

Monica, having thrown aside her huge white hat, is sitting on a little mound, with her back against a beech tree. She has taken her knees into her embrace, and just now is looking at her cousin from under heavily lashed lids, that seem barely able to support themselves, so languorous is the hour, and so contented her spirit.

Her companion can scarcely be said to be looking as free from care as she is; there is a slight suspicion of weariness in his eyes, his manner is somewhat tinged with a depression very foreign to it, which as a rule is of the debonair order.

"Anything the matter with you?" asks Monica at last.

"Yes, any amount of things."

"Well—go on—say them all over—it will do you good," suggests she sympathetically.

"Not for worlds—at least, not for many reasons. It would bore you; it wouldn't cure my case, and besides," with a half laugh, "my worries are of the kind difficult to put into speech."

"That means they are nothing but fancies."

"Does it?" Then, leaning back, and placing his hands behind his head, he turns his eyes slowly upon hers. "I wish I had never come down here," he says deliberately.

"What!" cries she, leaning toward him. "Has Julia proved unkind? or is it kind— Won't she marry you? Or will she?"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Norwood gruffly. "I wasn't thinking of Julia."

"No? Then why are you sorry you came to the Court?"

Norwood at this regards her fixedly. "I wonder," he

says, in a curious tone, "whether you really don't know, or whether you are an accomplished coquette!"

"Don't know what?" asks Monica, opening her large earnest eyes to their fullest, and looking at him with such sweet and honest surprise as awakes within his breast the deepest self-contempt. How could he have doubted her, for even one short moment. "To be a coquette," she says in a little dignified tone, "requires, I believe, practice. There is nobody down here except the rector and Sir John Frere."

"Sir John Frere?" apprehensively.

"Yes. He is toothless and seventy-five. The rector is hairless and sixty-one!" With this she very properly turns her back upon him.

"Thank goodness!" says Mr. Norwood devoutly. He feels affectionate toward both these old men—in spite of their abbreviations, and in spite of the fact that he has never seen either of them. "I beg your pardon very humbly," he says, after a pause full of eloquence.

No reply.

"Monica—speak to me."

"I will not," says Monica, giving herself the lie direct.

"Oh! but you are speaking," declares he. "I'm awfully sorry I said that, because it was as absurd as it was unpardonable."

"As you acknowledge it to be unpardonable, you can't well look for my forgiveness."

"Nevertheless I do," exclaims he boldly.

"Well, then, say at once I am not a coquette."

"Certainly you are not. You are an ang— You are all you ought to be. You are——"

"That will do," says Miss Monica, with a mischievous glance; "you will overdo it, if you go on any further. And now don't let us quarrel any more. Tell me what you were doing all the morning."

"Lounging after Julia."

"Happy man! I do so love that old Court, and I suppose she took you through the gardens. If only my grandfather had behaved properly, and left it to papa!

Instead of which here we are, playing second where we should be first."

"Well, it's nearly as bad for me," says the young man moodily; "I was brought up in the belief that, as your father was not in it, I was to be the heir. And see now where I am."

"You will be all right when you marry Julia," says Monica, with the friendliest encouragement. But this encouragement falls through.

"Oh! I dare say," says Mr. Norwood ungratefully, and with increasing gloom.

"But you can't be badly off. You must have money now, too," says his cousin, with a swift glance at his clothes, which are irreproachable.

"Not enough to keep me decently. My mother left me seven hundred a year."

"Seven hundred a year!" says Miss Norwood severely. "I think no young man could possibly require more than that. You have only yourself to think of—no other expenses—no grown-up daughter to dress and keep."

"Well, I could hardly have that, you know," says George Norwood apologetically. "I won't be twenty-six until next month."

"I was thinking of papa—if he had seven hundred a year, how happy we should both be!"

"No—you would instantly want more."

"I am sure not. That would give him all he requires —'a house full of books and a garden of flowers.'" She makes her quotation with a sweet wistful smile that goes to his heart.

"And you—what would it give you?" he asks earnestly.

"Me! Oh, I should be happy enough in his happiness," replies she lightly. "'The garden of flowers,' you see, would be as much mine as his. Now," she says with a little irrepressible sigh, "he hasn't even enough money to buy some of the books in which his soul delights."

"What are they?—I mean, their names?" asks he

eagerly, too eagerly! She raises her soft eyes to his; there is gratitude in them, but stern resolve too.

"No, no," she says. "Remember what you said a moment since—your income is not sufficient for yourself. You shall not waste it upon us."

"I don't think it is quite a civil thing to remember every word a fellow says," returns George reproachfully.

"Well, we won't go into that," replies she quickly. Then as though some hidden force compels her to return to the subject, she says, "Tell me how you get on with Julia?"

"Very well," impatiently. "She will look all that is satisfactory at the head of one's table. There is consolation, no doubt, in that thought, as," bitterly, "I suppose I must marry her."

"Oh, why say must?" gently, and with a glance at him from under her long lashes. "It is not a hardship, surely?"

"Perhaps I shouldn't have thought it so a month ago."

"She is young, handsome; that is all one requires, is it not?"

"Not quite! There is something else, I think—many other things; but above and beyond all, the essential grace that makes life—that is, married life—sweet; I mean sympathy."

"She hardly knows you yet," says Monica, deep but suppressed pity in her eyes. "By and by it may be different." Knowledge of Julia makes her confess to her secret soul that small hope for him lies in a nearer acquaintance with the cousin he needs must marry.

"In six months more it must all be settled," says the young man restlessly. "Julia up to that time has everything. It will then depend upon me whether she will still have everything or only half."

"You are sure she will accept you?"

"I am afraid—I mean," coloring hotly at his mistake, "I think she will do me the honor to be my wife."

"You think rightly. She will not resign the property. Only yesterday she told me she could not live

without it. In six months, then, she will still have everything, and—you into the bargain!"

Almost as these last words escape her, she repents them, and growing pale to her very lips, turns her head aside and becomes painfully anxious about an insignificant tear that a straggling briar has created in her gown.

"I am not so sure of that," says Norwood unsteadily. "Monica, look at me. Nay, you must," trying to compel her to return his gaze, which has grown impassioned.

He has taken one of her hands in his, and is trying to draw her nearer to him.

"Release my hand," she says in a low tone, yet with so much authority that he at once obeys her. There is a strange flash in her beautiful eyes that warns him to dare nothing further, and yet makes his pulses throb madly. What a strange proud glance it is, and yet what grief, what anguish it contains.

"I am tired," says the girl wearily. "I will go home—yes, you may come with me; but for the future"—she pauses and resolutely, but with evident difficulty, forces herself to look at him—"for the future you must promise me never again to forget——"

"I promise you faithfully," interrupts he quickly, "I shall never forget!"

She sighs.

Presently, turning to her almost as they reach the cottage, he says, "Are you going to the ball at the Grange to-morrow evening?"

"No."

"But you told me you were asked."

"So I was. I am not going, nevertheless."

"Why?" There is terrible disappointment in his tone.

"If you must know," she says gently, "it is because I have not got a gown good enough."

"That dress you wore at the Court last evening——"

"Is a fossil—almost an heirloom. The whole county knows it by heart by this time. No! pride forbids my exhibiting myself in it again."

"If you asked your father——"

"I should have one at once—at the expense of his

being even duller than usual for a month afterward. He would give me every penny he possesses, would probably sell some of his dearest possessions—books—to get me a few yards of muslin, in which to enjoy myself for an hour or two. Do you think I should enjoy those two hours, knowing that? What purgatory they would mean."

"They would, indeed!" he says reverently, gazing at her fair, loving face with unaffected admiration. He does her full justice, and understands perfectly the loyal affection that could find no happiness in a pleasure secured at the expense of a beloved object. Then he wonders why Julia, who has more money at her command than she quite knows what to do with, has had no thought for the poor little cousin in the cottage; and then I am afraid he thinks bitter thoughts of the woman he ought to marry.

"You must come to see me the day after the ball, and tell me all about it," she says lightly. "Second-hand to hear of it will be better than nothing."

"Yes, I will come," he says absently—but it is plain his thoughts are roaming, and that he is thinking of something far removed from the soft evening scene that surrounds him.

. . . . . .

The morrow passes; the day dies. Night comes on apace and covers everything. At the Grange the fiddles are sounding, bright forms are moving to and fro; the air is heavy with the breath of dying flowers. It is eleven o'clock, and the ball is well begun; the music grows sweeter, fainter; fans are waving gently.

Down in the cottage a girl is standing in a white gown at one of the open windows, and is gazing eagerly and with sad straining eyes at certain lights that two miles away can be seen distinctly through the still haze of the summer night.

Yes, he is there, of course; and happy and regardless of everything but the moment. It is most natural, is it not? What is there else for him to think of? She herself, how dearly she would like to be there too! She

glances at her gown, and tells herself that almost she might have gone—and then she shrinks within herself, and refuses to confess even to her own heart that it would have been agony to her to have appeared badly dressed before—before—oh! many people!

She sighs impatiently, and the tears gather in her eyes, and blot out the lights shining gayly so far away; they blot out, too, a dark figure that, advancing rapidly through the few shrubs, enters the second open window and, crossing the room, is at her side before she has time to recognize him.

It is George Norwood, of course—a little flushed from his run, and with his hair slightly ruffled, and with the gladdest light possible in his handsome eyes.

Monica, moving backward, involuntarily seizes the curtain with one hand and stares at him almost affrightedly. Her attitude reminds him of that happy moment when first he saw her. Before he has time to speak, she recovers herself and says, with a poor attempt at coldness:

"What has brought you here?"

"You know," replies he calmly; "an overpowering desire to see you—to hear your voice again. Your face was in every corner, smiling at me—your voice was clearer than the band, and called me incessantly. I have come!"

He sinks into a chair with all the air of a man who intends to make it his resting-place for the remainder of the evening.

"Where is Julia?" asks she, reproof in her voice, unmistakable gladness in her great gleaming eyes. She has a heavy spray of scarlet geranium in the bosom of her white gown. It rises and falls nervously, as she stands before him, trying vainly to be stern and angry.

"I don't know—I don't care. Dancing, I suppose."

"Go back to her. I won't have you here. Go back to her at once!"

"I won't," says Mr. Norwood.

"But I desire you," exclaims she, with a little stamp of her foot.

"Of course, if you turn me out, I shall have to go," says George Norwood, without showing the faintest symptom of an intention to depart; "but I certainly sha'n't go to Julia—I've had enough of Julia."

Monica's breath comes a little quickly; she lifts her hand to her soft rounded throat.

"You ought to be with the woman you mean to marry," she says slowly.

"I entirely agree with you," says Norwood with the utmost vivacity. "But that wouldn't drive me back to the Grange. I shall never marry Julia."

"You don't know what you are saying," says Monica, shrinking still farther from him.

"I do. Quite well. I ought to have said it before, but to-night I have made up my mind. If you refuse me, I shall never marry any woman—never! My darling, don't shrink from me; say you love me, say it—Monica, say it."

"No—no. You must be mad," says the girl, as, white as death, with both hands she keeps him away from her. "It is ten thousand a year. You shall not do this thing. In the morning you will think——"

"As I do now," interrupts he. "And as I thought yesterday morning, and every morning during the past week—that I love you better than my very life—to say nothing of filthy lucre."

The pressure of the hands that repulse him is not so strong now. Emboldened by this sign of coming weakness, he goes on with renewed spirit:

"We shall be poor, you know; but you said once you thought seven hundred a year quite enough to live on. You can't go back of that now. You said also that it would be a disgraceful and contemptible act on the part of any man to marry one woman when he loved another. You can't get out of that either, and I am not going to look either disgraceful or contemptible in the only eyes I worship."

The hands have grown quite reasonable now, and indeed have slipped from his chest to his shoulders.

"Monica, I am yours, whether you like it or not.

You must try and make the best of me," he says very humbly. "My beloved, I can only promise to be a good husband to you till death us do part!"

"Do not talk of death," she whispers tremulously.

"No? Shall we not pray that we may die the same day, and be buried in the same grave? But, living or dying, my own darling, every thought of my heart will be yours."

The hands have slipped a little higher up, and now, with a faint but heavy sigh that is almost a sob, she twines them round his neck and lays her soft cheek against his.

(You must imagine a good many asterisks here, and then we go on.)

"How was Julia looking?" asks she presently. They are now sitting close together—very close indeed—upon the patriarchal sofa that certainly has seen better days. But if it were satin and down, they could not be more contented with it.

"Very handsome," replies he with the most satisfactory indifference." "'Icily regular, splendidly null' sort of business. No soul, and too much flesh. My angel, you have saved me. To think that only for you I might have married her; should, to a moral certainty, you know, as I didn't know what love meant then."

At this juncture there is no mistaking he knows what love means now.

"If you should ever be sorry about this," says Monica nervously.

"Nonsense, darling; you know you are miles too good for me. I hope you will never be sorry, that's all;—Monica"—wistfully, "are you certain, positive, that you really love me?"

"I am as sure of it as that we are sitting here," says Miss Norwood solemnly.

A further demonstration that they now really know what love means!

"Do you know, I'm awfully hungry," says George presently, without the smallest shame, or recollection

that people in novels never eat anything when filled with the tender passion.

"Are you? Do you know so am I, but I didn't quite like to say it," confesses she naïvely. "The servants are in bed, I am afraid; but there is cold chicken in the pantry, and——"

"Let us go for it ourselves," says George. "As we are going to set up housekeeping on a limited scale, the sooner we learn how to lay a table and help ourselves, the better."

"I don't believe there is any sherry," says Miss Norwood, blushing generously; "but there is"—with considerable hesitation—"beer."

"If there is one thing on earth I love, it is beer," says George Norwood.

"There now," murmurs she reproachfully. "And just this moment you told me you loved only me."

"And so I do, you and you only," declares he fervently.

More asterisks!

"The key of the beer is always kept behind this picture," says Monica, pointing to the oil-painting of her grandmother he had admired on the first day of his arrival.

"That's a good thing to know," returns he, laughing.

"Well, take it down for me now; it will be a lesson. You will know exactly where to go for it next time."

She laughs, too, as she says this, and drawing him up to the chimneypiece, points to where the key hangs behind the picture.

Was it fatality, or was it awkwardness? As he puts up his hand he touches the painting, and the string that supports it snapping suddenly, the picture falls heavily to the ground—so heavily that the back parts from it, and leaves it rather a dilapidated object on the hearth-rug.

But something else is on the hearth rug, too! A piece of yellowish parchment, tightly folded, has slipped from between the picture and the frame. George and Monica, both stooping to pick up her grandmother, see this

paper at the same instant. She, being the woman, is naturally the most curious, and therefore the swiftest to snatch it.

"Now," she says gayly, putting it behind her back "what do you say it is—a legacy or a hundred-pound note, or mere padding to keep the portrait steady?"

"Mere padding," guesses he.

"A fairy gift," declares she.

Then they stoop over the lamp, and examine it cautiously.

When Norwood has opened it, and read two or three lines of the writing it contains, he utters an ejaculation, and turns to Monica with eyes bright with excitement.

"What was the date of our grandfather's will?" he asks eagerly. "I mean, how long before his death was it written and signed?"

"Three years," says Monica, gazing at him in wonderment.

"And this is dated six months before his death," says he, with something in his tone that resembles awe. "This is another and a later will, Monica, and it bequeaths all to your father!"

. . . . . .

It was quite true. I suppose the old man when feeling sickness come on him—that first attack of paralysis that suggested to him the possibility of death—had repented him of the betrayal of his promise to the wife, dead and gone for seven long years, but green still in his memory. To leave all to the son of her heart—the first, and therefore the dearest babe that had lain upon her bosom—was her prayer. And the father, though estranged from this son for many reasons too numerous to mention here, had succumbed as a husband should to the love of his youth, and had sworn to her that justice should be done.

Yet it was gall to him, the doing of it. Gladly would he have got out of the promise given to the dying woman, but even though the grave had closed upon her, she had a hold over him, born of memories when spring

was glad with flowers, and the sun shone, and all was youth and love.

And yet the gall rose to the top; and, after a bit, so strong was it that he looked about him for a way to fulfil his promise to the dead and yet work his own desire. He would make a new will—so far she was obeyed, poor soul!—leaving all to the eldest son, whom he so deeply detested, and it should be given into his own hands, but in such wise that he should be none the better by it.

His mother's portrait was made the medium. Behind it, in between the wooden back and the picture, the old man in secret hid the will that vexed him, and in the first document that suited his pride he inserted a codicil leaving portrait, concealed will and all, to his eldest son.

Yet Fate is strong, and Time brings all things to perfection.

Julia, when matters were made clear to her, took it all very badly. Having a very good income of her own, and an implacable temper, she refused to be comforted, and went abroad to Egypt, or Tangiers, or somewhere, and may now be married to a swarthy prince for all I know.

Pretty Monica has married her lover, and when last I saw her, was teaching her little son to 'Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross' on his grandfather's knee.

This story of a Southern girl, who, although belonging nominally to the "po' white trash," still aspired, will be of especial interest to the young. It was written for ROMANCE by Frank H. Sweet.

"DE CRAP MONEY."

"'Pears now like hit's gwyn' be er good crap year,—mellerin' weather 'n jes' rain 'nough ter keep de groun' from cripsin'. Ef hit keeps on like dis, we kin shorely pay fer de lan' come nex' crap 'n mebbe hev sompin' lef' fer er muel."

"'N what's hit all good fer?" asked Looizy. The girl spoke indifferently and with the slow, soft drawl peculiar to the Georgia cracker. "You uns wuk harder 'n ary man roun' hyer—harder 'n de plantation niggers derese'fs. 'N what's hit 'mount ter? Dey hez spen'in' money 'n goes ter circuses 'n hez sto' truck ter eat, whilst we-all jes' stick ter pones 'n grits 'n—wuk."

"But hits t'er pay fer de lan', Looizy," said the old man eagerly. "Arter hit's done paid fer, we kin hev mo' spen'in' money. Th'll be no mo' rents—ner sheers. An' we's de on'y pore fambly roun' hyer ez ar aimin' ter own lan' jes' like de quality fo'ks. I'm a wukin' fer you-all mo'n fer myse'f, Looizy; fer you 'n Betty 'n Molly. I'd like ter hev ye ekal ter de bes' uv 'em. But ef hit 'd be mo' pleasan' like ter hev sto' things, we mout spen' some o' de lan' money thet way."

The girl made a quick, impatient movement.

"'Taint de sto' things I keer fer," she said sharply. "I aint arter sech truck. But I 'low I hate everything roun' hyer; hit's so triflin' 'n no 'count. We-all ar pore, ign'rant crackers, 'n we caynt he'p ourse'fs. Gettin' lan' ain't a goin' ter make we-uns quality. We mus' hev l'arnin', 'n manners, 'n know 'bout things. But we-all caynt l'arn, fer thes no skewls 'n no one ez'll show us." Here she paused and dug her bare feet in the sand. After a moment she went on more slowly, and with a side glance at her father: "You 'n Betty 'n

de neighbors 'low ez I'm lazy 'n triflin' 'case I don't he'p 'n de fiel's 'n roun' de house. But I don't keer. I don't keer fer de lan', I don't keer fer wuk, 'n I 'low ez I don't keer fer anything ner anybody."

"Looizy!" There was wistfulness and entreaty in the voice, but not a shadow of reproach.

The girl hesitated, and a slight flush crept into her sallow face.

"Mebbe I don't mean hit jes' thet way," she said doubtfully. "You are better 'n mos' fo'ks, daddy, 'n I reckon I does keer fer ye some; 'n I 'lows I keer fer de birds 'n woods. They hez some meanin' to 'em. But cep'in' fer these I 'low ez livin' aint no gret."

"Ye're outen sorts, Looizy, 'n need mo' 'stractions. S'posen ye go down t' de settlemint 'long o' Betty 'n me 'n he'p kerry aigs? Mebbe hit 'd make ye feel mo' peart."

But she shook her head decidedly.

"I hate de settlemint! De boys call me Wil' Cat, 'n Cracker Comit, 'n fling things arter me. But I 'low thet I gin'rally fixes 'em," and she gave a harsh little laugh, in which was a trace of exultation. "You all kin tote de aigs. I reckon I'll go fishin' down de creek."

The old man watched her uneasily as she passed through the truck-patch and out across the fields to where an irregular line of willows marked the location of the creek. As she made her way down between the long rows of cotton and tobacco, which still sparkled with dew, her cheap calico lost itself in the richer hue of the growing plants. The sun had scarcely yet reached the tops of the willows, and some of its sparkles were caught in the tangles of the girl's golden hair and sent back into the patient eyes of the old man.

"Pore little gal!" he said softly. "Pore little gal, ez haint ary man ter he'p 'n show 'er. 'N hit's jes' now ez she needs er stronger han' ner mine—er knowin' han', like er woman's, ez mout lead 'n shapen 'er. Looizy's dif'runt from Betty 'n me; she cayn't be driv. Mebbe she's wil' 'n sassy, like de neighbors say, but seems like I cayn't bring myse'f ter be ha'sh. She's

like her maw wuz, 'n hit's de mounting blood that makes her fitified."

Not until the figure was lost in the dull green of the willows did the old man turn away. Then he hurried briskly toward the cabin, as though to make up for lost time.

For Andy Hopkins was a surprise to that neighborhood of indolence. He was a worker; a man who labored through the mere love of toil. But the early years of his labor had been without object, and his industry had been lost in the shiftlessness of many relations. It was only when he married, late in life, that he became ambitious of owning land. His wife was a bright, energetic mountain girl, who had the quickness and readiness of resource which he lacked. A two-mule farm was bargained for, and they began housekeeping in a cabin which they hoped would soon be changed for a frame house. But the house never came. Instead, there were sickness and bad crops and poor markets.

The years went by, and he was left with the little ones to look after. Each "crap" had lessened the mortgage, but not much. The whole amount was but a few hundred dollars, and he had thought that a few years would remove it. But money came slowly. Fifteen payments had now been made, and Looizy had grown from a baby to a big, wilful girl, who was at once his pride and despair. She neglected even the small duties he imposed upon her, and grew sullen at anything that seemed like advice. Sometimes she helped him in the field, but not often. She preferred to roam the woods or wander up and down the banks of the creek. The cabin was left entirely to the care of patient, even-tempered Betty. Even the cooking was shifted to the uncomplaining sister.

But Andy was hopeful.

"Hit's de oneasy blood thet's a wukin'," he said. "Looizy aint like we-all. She hez her sheer o' mounting blood. She'll come roun' all right, arter er while. But she mus'n' be driv."

This year the outlook seemed unusually promising.

The field crops were doing well, and the truck patch had never looked more flourishing. There had been showers to keep the ground moist, but no heavy rains to damage the growing plants. Andy worked early and late, and every day made him more confident that "de crap" would not only finish paying the mortgage but would also purchase a mule. So far he had been obliged to "'change wuk" with a renter "fer de loan ob er muel 'n plantin'-time."

But now there seemed every prospect of a plentiful harvest. And even the multitude of hens seemed determined to do their share toward making the season prosperous, and made the morning hours melodious with their vociferous cacklings.

It was late in the afternoon when Looizy returned from the creek. As she approached the cabin, she saw a strange team move away, and one of the two men who occupied the wagon she recognized as the settlement-doctor. Wondering what could have occasioned his visit, she hurried forward and soon reached the cabin. Opening the door, she almost stumbled over Betty, who was lying on the floor sobbing bitterly. But Looizy scarcely noticed her. She was gazing at the motionless figure on the bed opposite.

"What is hit?" she asked in a sharp whisper.

"Pap's done smasht awful!" wailed Betty. "What shell we do! What *shell* we do!"

The figure on the bed turned slightly and tried to raise itself, but sank back with a groan. In an instant she was by his side.

"What is hit, daddy?" she asked softly, as she smoothed the gray hair back from his face. "Kin I he'p ter raise ye, er—er anything?"

Andy looked up, and for a moment the knots of pain left his forehead and a look of pleased wonder crept into his face. Was this his Looizy, this soft-voiced girl who looked at him with the tender eyes of his dead wife? With the caressing touch of her cool fingers on his forehead, it was easy to forget the long years of coldness and disobedience.

"Ye mus'n' be skeered, honey," he gasped, "hit—hit aint nuthin' 'cepin' fer de pain 'n—'n fer losin' de crap."

He turned his head so that he could look out of the window. The truck-patch and part of the cotton-field were visible. After a moment he went on wistfully: "Dey looks mighty nice, honey; like's ef dey'd ben keered fer. But dey'll hatter go, I reckon. De neighbors ar right much triflin' 'n cayn't be 'pended on fer wuk. 'Sides, we aint de money ter git he'p."

"But what *is* de matter, daddy; how's ye hu't?"

Andy motioned ruefully toward the foot of the bed.

"Hit's jes' one fut," he said with a grimace, "on'y one. But de doctor 'lows hit are plumb bad, 'n thet I'm ter truckle right hyer on dis bed fer de Lord knows how long."

"Pap war a-grabbin' fer—fer er pickaninny ez war crawlin' 'n de road," said Betty between her sobs, "'n—'n de runerway hosses stompt 'im. Nig-nig-ers shouldn' be l'owed ter hev young uns 'n de road."

"'N war de pickaninny saved?" asked Looizy eagerly.

Her father nodded.

"De chile warn't ter blame," he said, "'n I couldn' he'p a-grabbin'. 'N shorely de young un 's wuth more 'n hit's cos' me. I aint a-mutterin' gin de hu't 'n de pickaninny, but I do mos' p'intedly hate ter lose de crap 'n not hev money fer de lan'. Ef on'y I could hev de hu't 'n be able ter wuk jes' de same." He paused to catch his breath, and looked up anxiously into her face. "'N hit'll come hardes' on you-all," he went on regretfully, "a-tendin' 'n a-frettin' 'n hevin' mo' wuk. But I cayn't he'p hit, Looizy, not jes' now."

"Never min', daddy, hit'll come roun' all right," she said quietly. "Jes' you res' easy 'n don' worry. We-all kin look arter things."

"'N—'n ye don' feel hard on me fer gittin' hu't? I war studyin' how t' make things mo' pleasan' like, 'n hyer I've done made 'em wuss. Hit 'll be mo' wuk, Looizy, honey, but I reckon ye'll hatter he'p Betty now 'n agin. Dey'll be de hens 'n pigs ter look arter,

'n de house-wuk 'n de tendin. We'll hatter be clost, but I reckon de hens 'll 'bout gin us er livin'."

He looked up anxiously, but something in her face brought a quick smile to his lips, and he sank back with a sigh of relief.

"I done tole ye not ter fret, daddy," she said softly. "Jes' you res' easy 'n 'pend on we-all ter look arter things. Ez fer yo' hu't, I'm glad on hit," a slight flush creeping into her face. "Hit's wuth more'n all de lan' 'n de craps in de worl'. 'N I'm gladder 'case hit's er darkey ez cayn't pay back. Ye 'member, daddy, how t' I dragged Mis' Kate's little boy outen de hoss pond 'n dey 'lowed I done saved his life, 'n how dey sen' me er dollar by dere coachman 'n said I war er good gal. I war thet mad I could er flinged de boy back 'n watched 'im drown."

"I b'leeve ye did fling de money 'n de nigger's face," said Andy, smiling a little at the look of scorn and disgust on her face. "But we mus'n' keep hard feelin's, Looizy; likely dey meant hit all right."

As the night came on, his foot grew more painful, and at times he was delirious. Looizy remained with him until after midnight, when, as he grew more quiet, she called Betty to take her place. Soon after, the old man sank into a quiet sleep.

It was late in the forenoon when he awoke. Betty was working about the room, and he could hear the voice of little Molly outside, calling the chickens.

"Whar's Looizy?" he asked when Betty approached the bed with his breakfast.

"I d'n' know. She done took some pone 'n bacon 'n lef' fo' sun up. She 'lowed mebbe she'd be roun' fo' night 'n mebbe she wouldn'. I axed her t' he'p me fus', but she 'lowed ez me 'n Molly could look arter de chores 'n house wuk."

The old man sighed. He had been hoping for better things from Looizy.

"Mebbe she'll he'p ye termorrer," he said at length. "Looizy aint feelin' right peart, lately, 'n—'n she fergets. Ye mus'n' speak cross, honey, when she duz

kem roun'. She aint like we-all, 'n hez right smart temper."

Soon after the doctor came and dressed the wound. After he left the old man spent the time in watching the clock and listening for the footsteps of his wayward girl. But the hours went by, and she did not appear. The old man grew restless and uneasy. "Pore little gal!" he muttered more than once. "She's young 'n don' re'lize. 'Cep'in' fer thet she wouldn' ferget. I cayn't b'leeve ez she don' keer."

In the meantime a half-grown girl was toiling slowly back and forth across the tobacco-field. The rows were long and the work hard and laborious, and the girl made little apparent progress. But gradually, as the hours went by, her position shifted from one side of the field to the other. All through the long, hot day she worked, not pausing to eat or rest, and only stopping when the shadows made it hard to distinguish the ground between the rows. Then she looked back at her work.

"Six rows done hoed," she said aloud; "hit's er good day's wuk. But I ar plumb tired."

Throwing the hoe across her shoulder, as she had seen her father do, she moved wearily toward the cabin. On entering she found Betty in the act of setting the supper of grits and molasses upon the table. Her father was watching her drowsily, and listening to the talk of Molly, who sat on the bed beside him.

As Looizy entered, he looked up quickly.

"Ye've ben er long time," he said. "We've ben lookin' fer ye right smart."

"I war busy," she answered, "'n couldn' spar' time fer dinner. Arter this I'll try 'n be roun' come noon. But how've ye ben all day, daddy?"

"Tol'ble peart!" Then, as she sat down beside him, he reached out and took one of her hands in his and looked up into her face. Her eyes were clear, and she met his gaze with a little smile. What did it mean? Had he been judging her too harshly. He drew her hand closer and noticed that it trembled, as though with pain. He raised it to the light.

"Why, Looizy"—and there was wonder and dismay in the voice—"yo' han's all solid blister!"

"Hit's on'y 'case dey aint usen ter de wuk," she answered hastily. "I've ben thet lazy my han's ar act'ally gettin' sof'. Er few days 'n de fiel' 'n dey'll make good han's fer wuk."

"'N—'n ye've ben a wukin' 'n de fiel' all day," he said slowly, "'n I a lyin' hyer 'n misjudgin' ye! But ye mus'n' do hit, Looizy, honey; hit's too hard. Hit 'd be hard wuk fer er man ter keep sech er big crap goin'. Ef ye 'low on he'pin', ye mout look arter de truck-patch. Thet'd be mo' easy, 'n hit'd gin we-all gyarden stuff ter eat 'long o' de aigs 'n grits."

But Looizy shook her head.

"I'm de oldes'," she said, "'n mus' look arter de man's wuk. Ef Betty 'n Molly hev time from de house-wuk, dey mout he'p 'n de truck-patch. I reckon I kin take car' de fiel's."

Then, turning to Betty, she added briskly: "Ar them grits mos' ready? I 'low I'm mons'rous hongry."

After supper she offered to sit up with her father, but both he and Betty objected.

"Ye're plumb beat out," said the latter, "'n cayn't sca'cely keep yo' eyes open. I sh'll sleep hyer on de floor, 'n ef pap wants anything, he kin call me."

As the weeks went by, Looizy's hands became accustomed to the work and the blisters disappeared. When she had finished hoeing the tobacco, she went to the cotton-field. From here she went to the melons. This was to be their final hoeing, and she had to be careful not to bruise the runners, which were already covering the ground. It took her nearly two weeks to do the work to her satisfaction. Then she went to the corn-field. In the mean time, Betty kept up the housework.

Molly took it upon herself to provide the table with berries or some other delicacy from the pastures or truck-patch. But she always insisted on spending most of the forenoons in the field with Looizy.

Each night the girls told their father of the day's work and made plans for the morrow. And listening

to their talk and watching the new interest that was coming into Looizy's face, the old man grew less weary of his enforced idleness.

As the spring days lengthened into summer, he gradually recovered the use of his foot, and at last was able to hobble about the cabin.

One day Looizy came in with a glowing face.

"De melons ar ripenin'," she said, "'n dere's goin' ter be er pow'ful lot—more'n we-all ever had afore."

"Den ye'd better go over t'ole Tompkins' arter dinner, 'n hev him come roun' 'ith de waggin. He'll be glad ter sell de bes' 'f 'em on sheers."

A few days later Looizy reported that thieves had entered the field the night before and taken some of the melons. That night the theft was repeated. Several days passed, and more of the melons were missed.

"I wouldn' keer so ef dey warn' so perticlar," said Looizy, "but dey jes' picks de bigges' 'n bes'."

Late that night she was awakened by a small figure at her bedside.

"What is hit, Molly?" she asked drowsily.

"I've done cotched 'em," was the startling answer. "Arter you all war 'sleep, I jes' crep' outen de cabin 'n hid 'mong de melon vines. Hit seemed mos' er year 'fore dey come, 'n I war plumb sleepy. But I jes' pinched myse'f, 'n when dey did come, I up 'n tole 'em 'bout we-all workin', 'n 'bout de lan', 'n bout pap bein' sick, 'n 'bout Looizy 'lowin' dey mout take de small melons 'n leave de big ones."

"Molly!" and Looizy sat upright in bed. She was wide awake now. "Aint you yarnin'?"

"I reckon not," confidently, "'case I've got two dollars ez de boy gin me fer de melons. Dey's nice boys, 'n 'lowed dey'd be roun' 'n see you-all termorrer. Dey's campin' up ter Long Pon'."

The next morning, as Looizy was on her way to work, she was met by several boys.

"Miss Louise, I reckon?" said one of then, raising his hat.

"Looizy, dey calls me," was the quiet answer.

"Well, I—I suppose that queer sister of yours has told you about our raiding the melon patch?" hesitating and coloring a little as he spoke. "But I assure you we meant no real harm. If we had known the facts in the case, we would never have entered the field. Somehow, melons and apples have always seemed different from other property. However," a quick, frank smile coming into his face, "that isn't what we're here for. We wish to apologize, and to make some arrangement for the future. You see we boys are very fond of melons—can't possibly get along without them—and we have decided not to pick any more after dark. We might go to the settlement after them, but that would be a long walk, and the melons would not be so fresh. Besides, we have acquired a taste for yours. Now, if you are willing to trust us, we will act fair and square, and pay you for every one we take. We shall want a lot, as there is another crowd of boys coming down from Augusta next week."

"Augusty?" looking up quickly, "I 'low thet's whar dey hez skewls—fer gals, I mean?"

"There are several—good ones, I believe," he answered, looking at her with more interest. "Do you think of going?"

"N—no! I jes' axed. I reckon you kin hev what melons you want. We-uns ar glad ter sell 'em." And prices were soon agreed upon, and lived up to by the boys.

Before the melons were gone Andy's foot had so much improved that he was able to hobble out to the fields. Leaning on his cane and assisted by Looizy, he went slowly from one field to another.

"Hit's er good crap," he said, "ez good ez I ever raised myse'f. Cohn mos'ly eared, terbacco good, 'n scarcely any bumble-bee cotton 'n de whole fiel'. I cayn't hardly b'leeve ez how one gal hez done hit all. But ye kin res' now, Looizy, honey; I 'low I sh'll hire he'p ter harves' de crap. De melons hev done right well, 'n we all kin spar' de money."

"I reckon dey'll hatter be some he'p ter harves' de crap," was the answer, "but I 'low ez I'll wuk 'long uv 'em. I don' min' de wuk like I uster."

One afternoon, a few months later, Andy called the girls into the cabin. Going to his strong-box in the corner, he took from it a bag that was heavy with silver and small coins. These he emptied upon the table, and divided into two piles.

"Hit's de mos' crap-money we-all have ever had ter oncet," he said, "ef hit *war* made by er gal. Now this," pointing to the larger pile, "is for de lan'. Hit 'll pay hit all up, cl'ar. 'N this," touching the other pile, "is for Looizy ter go ter skewl up 'n Augusty. I had er talk 'long o' de boys ez bought de melons, 'n dey tole me 'bout Looizy's axin' arter de skewl. Arter thet I went 'n seed de sto'keeper down t' de settlemint, 'n he gin me p'ints. This money 'll pay fer skewlin' ter nex' crap, 'n by thet time th'll be mo'. Looizy kin bo'd 'long o' her Aun' Lizy ez lives 'n Augusty. Ef I'd er foun' out 'twar skewlin' ez ye war wantin', I mout er he'ped ye afore, Looizy, honey."

The girl had listened with a growing wonder in her face. Several times she essayed to speak, then rushed from the cabin.

"Pore little gal!" said the old man, "I didn' know ez she keered so much."

One hardly realizes the enervating effects of Reason and Civilization until he reads such a story as the following, adapted from the Polish for *Longman's Magazine*. The recital of such bravery, such stoicism, such marvellous physical achievement, fans the barbaric spark which is latent in the Modern Man, and makes us half sigh for the days when there were such giants as the Attaman and his Kosaks.

THE ATTAMAN.

A TALE OF THE KOSAKS.

I.

The banks of the River Dnieper, usually so peaceful, were to-day crowded with martial figures. The grazing flocks have had to make way for soldiers and steeds; alike the flowers and the ripening grain have been trampled under foot, and mingled with the voice of the rushing water comes the neighing of horses and the clank of arms.

For many days past the country had been alive with horses and men; from all directions, all sides, solitary riders had been seen wending their way across the desolate steppes, now and then joining together in little groups of threes and fours as their practised eyes recognized a comrade in a distant speck on the horizon or distinguished a lance through the brushwood of a copse —all converging toward one point, all animated by the same motive. Red *kalpaks* were spotted over the country as thickly as poppies among the ripening corn, till all were drawn together into one long garland and the entire army assembled on the banks of the river.

It was the Attaman Kunicki, the father of the Kosaks, who had thus summoned together his forces, and when all were collected, entering the assembly of chiefs, he spoke as follows:

"Noble chieftains! I have received an order from our master the King, but without your advice and concurrence I neither can nor will decide anything, and

have therefore resolved to inform you of it, and after the reading of the message we can then deliberate upon what answer is to be given. Let the Secretary produce the royal letter and read it aloud."

The Attaman, having finished speaking, made way for the Secretary, who, taking from his breast the letter wrapped in a linen cloth, unfolded the parchment and thus read:

"Sieur Attaman of Ukrania!

"The dangers which threaten alike Christianity and the safety of our kingdom have decided us upon conducting an expedition to put a barrier to the Ottoman powers. For this reason I have summoned you, Sieur Attaman, along with your brave Kosaks, to join us in the war to which we have pledged ourselves, your fidelity, readiness, and valor being well known to us.

"We therefore expect and desire that on receiving our letter you will put yourself at the head of your troops, and, traversing all the provinces which recognize the Sultan's authority, will cut off the passage of the infidels should they attempt to send reinforcements to headquarters.

"You will divide your forces as you think best, and intrust the subordinate commands to those you deem worthy of confidence.

"Commending you to the protection of the Almighty and counting on your promptness and fidelity, your King and master,

"JOHN III."

Dead silence followed the reading of this letter, but when the tongues are quiet, the minds are all the more busy at work, and every brow was drawn together in thoughtful perplexity. It was an ancient chieftain who finally broke the silence, and, stroking his snow-white beard, thus spoke:

"My brothers and my lord Attaman, it is now late in the year, and this undertaking is a difficult and a perilous one; it had, methinks, been more wise to await the coming of Spring, but when the King has spoken, it is not for the Kosaks to hang back. Therefore, if it so please you, let us go forward in the name of the Lord and seek to destroy the infidel Turk."

Noisy acclamations greeted this speech.

"To war! to war! Lead us forward, Father Attaman, against the enemy."

"My brothers," said Kunicki, when silence was again restored, "it is now full nine years since you did me the honor to elect me as your Attaman, and until now it has pleased the Almighty to bless my sword with success and to enable me to lead you victoriously in all encounters with the enemy. When, five years ago, contrary to the usages of our people, I took to me a wife, I wished to resign my authority and hand over the crane's feather to some other man unfettered by family ties. But you, my brothers, you would not accept my demission, and so I remained your Attaman as before, in which position I have always striven to do my duty toward you and my country."

Loud cries of "Thou hast! thou hast! Father Attaman!" interrupt him; then he proceeds:

"I have always kept in mind that an Attaman has no right to think of himself, and the moments I have snatched from you to press to my heart my wife and child have been few and far between. Now, however, that our master, the King, summons us to a longer and more perilous undertaking, I wish to ask you again whether you are indeed satisfied to place yourselves under my guidance? If you have more confidence in some other man, if you have misgivings lest the remembrance of my home should make me less eager to advance into the enemy's country, lest the thought of my Ilandzia's dark eyes, the smile of my little Sawka, should render my vision less keen to mark a foe, you have only to speak and I am ready to yield my place to whosoever you choose, accompanying you as your comrade and brother wherever my successor may think fit. Let not a false regard for my person restrain you from expressing your wishes. Whatever you decide will be well chosen."

But the Kosaks answer him as with one voice, which rises and swells like the rolling of thunder:

"To whom should we intrust ourselves if not to thee,

Father Attaman? Is there another man who can wield his lance as thou canst, as lightly as a clerk wields his pen? Whose sword can, like thine, make the enemies' heads to drop like overblown poppy flowers? What other can swim like the wild duck, and dive like the otter under the waves of the Dnieper? Which man knows better how to castigate a rebel with the flat of the broadsword? And who can lead us as thou hast done many a time in the wild dance against the Tartar hordes? Lead us now against the infidel Turk: we will have no other Attaman but Kunicki!"

And they press around him, embracing his feet and his knees; they raise him on their shoulders, exclaiming, "Glory be to God! Long live our Attaman! Long live the Kosaks! Death to the infidels!" till the banks of the river re-echo for miles around with the sound of their cries.

When at length Kunicki has extracted himself from their embrace, he speaks again:

"So be it, my brothers; we shall start with the early dawn, and be far on our way ere the sun reaches the summit of the sky. In time of war the drink of a Kosak is water, and his food dry bread and salted fish. Before the forty days of Lenten fasting even the monks are allowed to eat and make merry, and God alone knows how long our Lent may last. Master Yessoul, deal out the mead, the spirits, and the provisions among our Kosak brothers; let each one feast and rejoice to-day, for who can tell what to-morrow may bring?"

II.

A wooden house, whitewashed, and with thatched roof, standing against a dark oak forest, shines dazzling white in the moonlight.

It is midnight, and every one within is asleep—no, not every one, for a solitary light burns at one casement, and a woman paces up and down a large room.

The room has heavy wooden beams across the ceiling, white walls, and a wide chimney place. The woman has black eyes and rosy, curved lips, and a

waist that is round and firm. She is young and beautiful, but with the beauty of a young matron, not that of a maiden. She resembles the rose which is open but not yet overblown, or the berry which is ripe without being past its prime.

Behind a curtain a beautiful boy of four is wrapped in slumber, his even-drawn breathing the only sound to be heard in the quiet room. But presently another sound breaks the silence—the dogs outside have given the alarm, and bark furiously as the galloping noise of horses' hoofs is heard drawing near, till a well-known voice restores them to silence, and the doors are thrown open wide to admit the master of the house.

In another moment Ilandzia, the Attamanycha (wife of an Attaman), is in her husband's arms.

"Dearest husband! what joy to see thee again. Say, wilt thou stay awhile with us?"

"But short, but short, my dearest. I come but to see if thou art well, to kiss thee but once, and then say farewell. Such is the fate of the Kosak. The King orders me to march against the infidels; a simple Kosak cannot disobey him, still less an Attaman. Ilandzia, dearest, dry thy tears. If God permits, I shall return here safe and well; if fate has decreed that I shall remain yonder, under a mound of earth, remember, wife, that thou are the mother of my child, and bring him up to be a brave and a worthy Kosak. Farewell, farewell! my heart bleeds to leave you both, but I dare not linger."

He bends once more over his sleeping child, holds his wife for one instant more to his heart, and is gone again; while Ilandzia sinks down sobbing near the couch of her son.

III.

The Kosak army have set forth on the march—eight thousand as gallant men as ever wielded the sword and the lance. The populace salute them loudly on their passage, and many a maiden's heart follows them over the frontier.

And now they have reached the enemy's country, and

everywhere their victorious blades have made way for them. They have passed through fertile lands teeming with the golden grain, purple vines, and rich flocks, and, like an army of locusts, have they passed on, bringing devastation and death, and leaving the country behind them stripped and naked, with smoking ruins and rifled granaries.

In vain do the Mussulmans cry out "Aman! Aman!" (mercy); for the Kosaks know no aman. Their cimeters cut like the blade of a razor, and their bullets carry death all around. The rivers run red with the blood of the slain, and their corpses are strewn all over the land.

The first breath of Winter finds the Kosaks many hundred miles away from their homes. Hard frosts have rent the earth asunder in many places, and a light powdering of snow warns man and beast to draw themselves under shelter for the Winter.

Kunicki is obliged to encamp his troops for awhile and wait the movements of the enemy. He has chosen a deep, sombre valley in which to intrench his army, closed in by rocky heights on either side; and here he prepares to abide until he gets further news.

The chieftains shake their heads, for they love not this valley. Is it not justly named the valley of misfortune? And when did it ever bring aught but woe to whoever has set foot in it? No traveller passes this way without crossing himself many times to keep the spirit of evil aloof. But they dare not speak or murmur against Kunicki's will, for in time of war the Attaman is omnipotent, and his word is held sacred as the word of God himself.

The army itself sinks into a Winter torpor. A general gloom pervades the camp. There is no more singing and dancing, no more feasting or rejoicing. Moody and shivering, the men crouch together, watching with apathetic eye the fate of those who daily fall lifeless beside them, struck to the heart by the Winter's icy poniard.

Then at last come the scouts, and report that a large

horde of Tartars have been distinguished hovering on the horizon.

At the head of his troops the Attaman advances into the plain and ranges them for battle. They can see naught but gray pointed rocks on all sides of them—gray rocks to the front, to the right, and to the left of them, all looming at them coldly through the fog.

But now the gray rocks in front seem to assume other shapes; they grow at once more distinct and more fantastic in appearance. No longer mere rocks, they look like phantoms; no longer mere phantoms, they look like men—like Tartars!

It is but too true; the vast hordes are ranged in a semicircle awaiting them, and behind there are Tartars also—Tartars everywhere closing round them!

The white pennon denoting the presence of the Khan is flying overhead, and the shrill note of the tabalszana (a musical instrument) resounds from the rocks, while a hailstorm of poisoned arrows come pouring in on the Kosaks.

They adjust their guns and prepare to make a desperate resistance. Fifty times are they forced back, but fifty times do they advance again. Inch by inch do they fight their way to the entrance of the valley, and at last they reissue from it, victorious indeed, but with the loss of five thousand brave men.

They leave the cursed valley heaped with the bodies of the slain, both men and horses, a terrible and hideous sight.

IV.

Slowly and sadly the Attaman prepares to return homeward with the wreck of his army.

But the curse of the valley of misfortune seems to pursue them even further, for with each day their numbers grow less; cold, sickness, and famine are all busy at work mowing down fresh victims. The Tartars, though superior in numbers, do not again dare to approach at close quarters, yet they hover around in wide circles, their piercing cry, like the voice of

the wild curlew, forever irritating the ear, and their poisoned darts still finding their way to many a brave heart.

The Attaman fights gallantly against despair; he watches over the army as a father over his children; he animates and encourages them like a brother; he consoles and tends them like a mother; he thinks and provides for them like a chief, yet he shares each hardship and fights like a simple soldier. His csapka (head covering) is pierced through and through by the enemy's darts, and his burka (coat) hangs ragged from sabre cuts, yet his body, as though shielded by a magic charm, is preserved unscathed.

Only as they draw near the frontier of Ukrania do the Tartars cease haunting their passage, and are gradually lost to sight in the wide steppes.

The Attaman, with only three hundred men remaining, regains his native soil. At the frontier they meet the first Zaporogue sentinels, who salute them silently. No word is spoken on either side; no news of the war is asked or given; only the patrol hands over to Kunicki a parchment, signed by the chiefs, ordering him to repair at once to Biala-Cerkiew, where they sit in council; for the Attaman, who is sovereign lord and master as long as he is in the enemy's country, is bound to submit to the council of chiefs as soon as he has again put foot on his native soil.

The spring has come; but the Attaman gazes not at the green plains nor at the flowers. The violet has no perfume for him, nor can the song of the lark take the sadness from his heart.

When they reach Biala-Cerkiew the populace does not come out to greet them, nor are the bells ringing joyfully. Only one of the chiefs awaits them and conducts the Attaman to where the council is sitting.

In a vast hall, with benches ranged around it, the gray-haired chieftains are seated awaiting Kunicki's arrival. They are all clothed in long sheepskin pelisses, their heads covered with black csapkas. In the centre of the room, on a table, stands a crucifix and a

Book of Gospels ready opened, and near it waits the black-robed Archimandrite (priest).

"My lords," says Kunicki, entering the assembly, "I have come hither to hear your bidding."

"Father Attaman," answers the most ancient among the chieftains, "what hast thou done with the army of Ukrania? Where hast thou left the flower of our Kosaks? Eight thousand of our bravest men did we intrust to thee, and but three hundred hast thou brought home."

"My lords," replies the Attaman, uncovering his head, but holding himself upright, "my heart is stabbed with grief when I think of the sufferings our soldiers have endured, but it swells with pride when I remember what they have done. Scores of towns and villages sacked and burned, the inhabitants of two provinces cut to pieces—these are our deeds. The vast hordes of the Tartars, along with sickness, hunger, and cold, have destroyed the rest of our army. Such was the will of the Almighty and my misfortune. God is my witness, and with Him the three hundred Kosaks who have returned, that I have neither spared my arm nor shielded my breast in their defense."

"Canst thou swear it?" again asked the ancient chief.

"I will swear it on the Gospel." And the Archimandrite reading aloud the formula of the oath, the Attaman kneels, and, kissing the cross, swears by the blood of the Saviour that he has spoken the truth, and will relate to them on his conscience all that has taken place. And rising he details to them from beginning to end all the events of this disastrous campaign. The recital of so much misery and misfortune touches every one to tears, and the chieftains shake their hoary heads as one after another they withdraw to the debating room.

Kunicki remains alone, his eyes fixed mournfully on the ground, his clasped hands resting on the hilt of his sword, motionless as a statue. He raises not his eyes even when after a time the doors are reopened and the council returns, and one of them takes the word:

"Father Attaman! the chieftains do not accuse thee either of treason or of cowardice; they acknowledge thy valor, nor do they complain of thy fidelity, and they recognize thy behavior to have been throughout upright and honorable. Never yet has there been an Attaman dearer to the hearts of the Kosaks. But the interests of the nation command us to put aside all personal feelings, and therefore, as till now there has been no instance of a chief returning without his army, it will be wise to make an example of this case, so as to foresee and prevent any recurrence of the same. A less noble man might be punished by degradation from his office, but thou, Kunicki, shalt not be stripped of thy dignity in favor of any other man. This were ingratitude on our part. So Attaman thou shalt remain till thy death. Yet as the council in its wisdom does not deem it to be seemly that an Attaman should survive the loss of his army, it will be advisable that thy noble life should come to a speedy termination.

"Father Attaman! Thou shalt die by the sword of thine own people, but thy death shall be a noble and an honorable one, in consideration of the many and valuable services thou hast rendered to the nation. Thou shalt keep to the last the honors due to thy rank, and be executed as befits an Attaman and leader of the Kosaks. Only to lay thy head on the block shalt thou put aside the crane's feather, and thy successor shall not be elected till thy body is laid in the earth."

Kunicki raised his head, and viewed the assembly calmly, without agitation, without fear, as he answered:

"My lords, far be it from me to make any petition or prayer for mercy. Let your judgment take its course; but before my death I wish once more to see my wife and child, and say farewell. Fix a day for my execution, and I swear to be punctual, on my honor as a Kosak and an Attaman."

Several voices answered sadly: "Father Attaman! Take as much time as thou pleasest—a week, a month, if necessary."

But Kunicki returns: "The longer I wait, the greater

will be the pain. What is deferred must equally come to pass. One day will suffice, and I thank you for that. Farewell, till to-morrow."

He leaves the assembly, passing down the ranks of the chiefs, who all uncover and profoundly salute the Attaman as he goes.

V.

During the long dreary Winter there had been sorrow and mourning within the white house which stood at the edge of the oak forest. Constantly Ilandzia had mourned and wept and pined in her solitude; but now the end of her troubles is at hand, for is not her husband to be restored to her again? Many a sleepless night had she passed in thinking of the dangers to which he was exposed, not knowing each moment whether she ought not to be bewailing him as dead. But now at last a joyful day had come to her, for she has heard that he has alike escaped the cruel cimeter of the Turk, the poisoned arrow of the Tartar, the tainted breath of disease, and the sharp tooth of the frost. He is alive and unscathed, and will soon be given back to her faithful heart.

And Ilandzia, with a smile in her eyes and a song on her lips, goes about in and outside the dwelling house, directing and disposing each household detail, so as worthily to welcome the beloved guest she expects.

And everything shines and beams as if in joyful anticipation; never before had the young oak leaves seemed as vividly green, nor the new-born lambs as dazzlingly white, nor the promise of the orchard as rich. And never either had Ilandzia herself appeared as lovely and as fair, for joy is a mighty beautifier, and sets off a woman's fairness as with a golden crown.

Gayest and happiest is little Sawka, who with the buoyancy of youth revels in the beauty of the day, in the sunshine, and in his mother's smile, which he has not seen for so long.

Of a sudden he comes running in breathless over the greensward to Ilandzia—

"Mother, mother, see how my father is flying toward us on his chestnut horse!"

And together they hasten to meet the advancing horseman. With the keen-sighted glance of love, Ilandzia has marked, ere yet he has left the saddle, the heavy cloud on her husband's brow, and the lines which hardship and trouble have traced there. It is in vain that she pours forth expressions of love and joy into his ear, for he seems not to hear her; in vain does she hang on his arm and lay her head on his shoulder; her eyes can win back no responsive smile in his. In vain, too, does the little Sawka play with his sword and seek to attract him by childish caresses—his face relaxes not.

"Let us go in," he says, at last, having stood motionless near the entrance; and Ilandzia starts at the sound of his voice, so changed, so sad, so hollow.

Ilandzia, all her former joy now chilled by a nameless terror, does not venture to speak for fear of disturbing his grief, and she dimly guesses that for the soul of an Attaman there can be no greater sorrow than to have seen his army perish. But she vows within her heart that her love and her care shall yet restore the light to his eyes and the smile to his lips.

After a prolonged silence Kunicki at last bids his wife tell him all that has taken place at home during his absence; then he orders and arranges his affairs as though he were going off on a distant journey, and gives instructions with regard to the education of his son.

Ilandzia listens in a kind of stupor, and a freezing sensation comes over her. With an effort at last she speaks—

"Dearest husband, surely thou art not going off again on a new expedition? It is time to take some rest, and let us tend and console thee for all thy troubles and sufferings."

"No, Ilandzia," he answers gloomily. "It is not to a new expedition that I go; and I shall rest enough, never fear."

"But surely thou wilt not leave us already?" she insists as he rises and prepares to buckle on his sword.

"Look at our little Sawka, see how he smiles and begs thee to remain," and she pushes her son into the father's arms, not guessing how she is adding to his torments.

The Attaman presses the boy to his heart, and his tears rain fast and hot over the child's curly head. Ilandzia makes one last effort before he leaves the room—

"At least take supper with us before going, dear husband?"

"I have no hunger."

"Then rest thee for an hour longer."

"I cannot rest to-day; by daybreak to-morrow I must be at Biala-Cerkiew to attend the council of chiefs," and his voice faltered at the last words. Then calling an attendant: "Bring out my horse."

"Which horse, Father Attaman?"

"The chestnut; it has rested sufficiently, and I shall want no other to render me this last service."

He places one foot in the stirrup and prepares to mount; then, drawing back again, he once more seizes Ilandzia in his arms; passionately, almost violently, he strains her to his breast, pressing fierce kisses on her pale, anxious face.

"Come back quickly, for I am sad," she murmurs into his ear; and he answers—

"Please God that we shall meet again, never more to part!" Then with a sudden movement he disengages himself from her clinging embrace and, vaulting into the saddle, rides off at furious speed, never looking around as Ilandzia's voice keeps calling after him to return soon—very soon.

VI.

The chestnut steed carries him with lengthy stride past the meadows where the flocks are grazing peaceably, past the orchard where the trees are bending beneath the weight of rosy-tipped blossoms, past the fields where is sprouting the green corn, which he will never more see ripen; and only then, when he is out of sight

of the oak forest and the white house, does he slacken his speed and allow himself to think.

There is no one to see him. He can indulge his sorrow and allow his tears to flow unchecked. It is not a joyful thing to leave a lovely wife and a beloved child; to lose alike the joys of a family and the glory of an Attaman; to go forth into a strange world, not knowing whither or how. And it is of his own free will that he is going to his death; it is his own hand which is guiding his horse by the most direct road to Biala-Cerkiew, whence he knows that he will never more return. There is no one to force him to go there, nothing to prevent him from making an evasion to Podolia—nothing—save his simple word. His gallant horse, which had carried him so often and so faithfully, could soon take him out of reach of all pursuit; but this thought does not even enter his mind. The word of an Attaman is sacred, and Kunicki will be an Attaman to the last.

The new day, which is to be the last in his life, has risen in full glory as he nears his destination. On the public place in the town the chiefs are assembled, attired in their robes of state, to do honor to the occasion. In the centre of the group stands a large wooden block, and near it a Tartar prisoner of gigantic frame and ferocious appearance is holding a mighty sabre.

The chestnut horse which bears the Attaman is descried in the distance flying over the steppe, and the sound of timbals gives notice of his approach. Every one uncovers to receive him, and the mounted Kosaks drawn up at the gates of the town salute him with their customary cry of "Long live our Attaman!"

Kunicki, dismounting, strokes his horse in sign of farewell. His countenance is grave and calm as he says:

"I trust that I am punctual and that I have not kept you waiting, my lords?"

"Father Attaman! Thou art punctual and faithful as thou ever wert in the field, and moreover it is but our duty to wait on thee."

"Noble chieftains! I have come hither in order that

your sentence may be fulfilled. I place my son under your protection; let him become a faithful Kosak and fight for the liberty of his country, and may he be more fortunate than his father has been."

"We shall bring him up to be worthy of such a father," answers the most ancient of the chiefs.

"I salute my companions in misfortune and wish you all health and prosperity," continues Kunicki, "and may the Kosak people ever be great and glorious."

"Father Attaman! Thou hast acted nobly and as befits an Attaman. May our Kosaks follow thine example, and ever die as bravely. Achmet, prepare to do thy work."

The Attaman kneels down, uncovers himself, placing his csapka with the crane's feather by his side, and after a short prayer lays his head upon the block.

The gigantic Tartar rolls up his sleeves to the shoulders, raises his sabre, and makes it whistle twice through the air; the third time it descends with unerring aim, the Attaman's head has bounded from the block, and rolled some paces off on the ground.

. . . . . .

With much pomp and ceremony the body was raised up and placed on a bier of cedar wood, draped with costly hangings, and was carried to the grave, followed by a stately procession of chiefs and Kosaks, the church bells ringing a mournful dirge for the death of the Father Attaman.

For many weeks and months they mourned for Kunicki, the bravest, wisest, and most beloved Attaman ever known, and all alike bewailed the cruel fate which had cut short this noble life.

And Ilandzia, in the white house near the oak forest, mourned for him till the end of her days.

This very funny bit of New England folk-lore is contributed to ROMANCE by Fred M. Hopkins.

AN INDIAN WAR-WHOOP.

In one of the quiet, pleasant, picturesque valleys of eastern Connecticut nestles the pretty, old-fashioned village of Windham. A century ago this was one of the most important towns in the State east of the Connecticut River. Here were located the county jail, the county court-house, and other public institutions, which, with its prominent public men, raised the town to a position of influence and wide reputation.

During the last half-century, or a little over, these institutions, one by one, have been removed to more thriving centres; bright and ambitious young men have sought other and more promising fields of activity, and the town, once so important, has been shorn of its old fame and power, until it has become simply a relic of the "good old times"—a typical New England village, the every-day existence of which has become dreamy and monotonous, and which lives chiefly in its traditionary history.

A century-and-a-half ago, Squire Elderkin and Colonel Dyer were the two most prominent men of Windham, and were well known throughout the State. Both were lawyers; both were prominent in public affairs; both were wealthy for the times in which they lived; both had large social followings, and both were intensely jealous of each other.

Squire Elderkin was a tall, lean, bilious-looking man, with heavy, raven-black hair and piercing dark eyes. He was of aristocratic lineage, and in manner cold, selfish, and ambitious. He was a learned lawyer, an able advocate, and a merciless wit. Few could give a more rapier-like thrust than he—a thrust that never failed to reach its mark, and always left a rankling wound and an ugly scar.

Colonel Dyer was a different kind of a man in every

respect. In person he was short and stout. He had a merry blue eye, a beaming countenance, and a good word for every one. Few could tell a better story or more surely make one laugh without knowing the reason why. Genial, happy, sociable, always bubbling over with fun and good-humor, he never was happier than when surrounded with company, and his wide circle of friends always found him a royal entertainer. As a result, he became one of the most popular men in the State. His magnetic, winning qualities were more than a match for the Squire's learning and brilliancy. Colonel Dyer was prominent, too, in military as well as political matters. Windham, in those days, was a frontier town, and the troublesome red men caused a great deal of anxiety at times. Whenever the situation became threatening, Colonel Dyer was called to lead, and he always proved a willing soldier and a skilful commander.

Squire Elderkin was very envious of the Colonel's popularity, and made him the butt of many a keen, piercing shaft of wit. The Colonel in time became very sensitive to these wounds, and, although hatred was foreign to his nature, he conceived a thorough dislike for the Squire, and frequently, in defense, made a sharp, stinging retort. The situation went from bad to worse, until finally there was many a sharp encounter between the friends of the contending parties. The little town, which had hitherto been blessed with happiness and contentment, became a factious, quarrelsome community.

Where these divisions would have ended, if an event, destined to make "Old Windham" famous, had not intervened, no one can tell.

The spring and early summer of 1758 was a season of intense anxiety for the settlers of New England. The memorable French-and-Indian War, with its unparalleled atrocities, was at its height. Massacres, in which whole villages were destroyed, were of frequent occurrence.

Windham had been especially stirred up by the blood-curdling reports that were frequently borne from the north. Several times rumors of threatened invasion by the warlike savages and their more savage allies aroused the town to a wild pitch of excitement. On these occasions the villagers put implicit faith in the Colonel's military sagacity and leadership. He was always placed in command, and his word was law—in short, he was the Miles Standish of this interior Connecticut town.

In early summer of this year, the Connecticut settlers were called upon to render additional assistance in the struggle against the French. The French forts of the north were now the objective point; and Colonel Dyer immediately began raising a regiment to help in the reduction of Crown Point. The men were sent forward as fast as they enlisted, while Colonel Dyer remained to continue raising recruits.

One dark, sultry night of this memorable year, the long-looked-for and long-dreaded crisis seemed at hand. Late in the evening an excited alarm was given by the village parson's slave. The negro was badly scared, and rushed from house to house, wildly shouting, "The French are coming, The French are coming."

The excited villagers ran to their windows and doors, and were met with a din and roar that filled them with amazement and terror. Such shrieks! Such yells! The very heavens seemed filled with unearthly sounds; the earth seemed to quake beneath the tread of the coming enemy.

"We will have Ker-nel Dy-er. And El-der-kin too. We will have Ker-nel Dyer. And El-der-kin too. Ker-nel Dyer Elderkin too," shrieked the hideous voices in unison. Colonel Dyer and Squire Elderkin had been particularly active against the French. The whole village jumped to the conclusion that the French and Indians were anxious to capture these two leaders. As the outlandish shrieks seemed to increase in volume, and to grow nearer and nearer, the last doubt that the savages were upon them passed from every mind.

Colonel Dyer hurried to the village green when the alarm was given, and the clanging church bell soon called the villagers together. Squire Elderkin, badly frightened promptly responded, well armed with a trusty flint-lock. Very soon the able-bodied men of the town were in line, and Colonel Dyer was unanimously chosen commander.

The old feud, that a few hours before divided neighbor from neighbor, was forgotten; all united like brothers to defend their common homes.

Orders were immediately given to advance, and the Windham villagers marched up the hill to the east to check the enemy. The shout for "Colo-nel Dy-er and El-der-kin too" steadily grew stronger and stronger, and the gallant Colonel was reported to have shown unusual caution on this occasion, while Squire Elderkin, who had never had military experience, implored the Colonel to halt his command on the hill and wait until daybreak before he proceeded, as everything seemed to indicate overwhelming odds in favor of the enemy.

The last half of the night was one of terror. The villagers, who had been left behind, waited to hear the roar of battle, but as the hours dragged their tedious length along, without the discharge of a single piece, all gave way to the fear that some great horror was impending. The night, however, finally wore away; the east began to grow gray, and the light was slowly creeping over the hills when the clamor for "Colonel Dyer and Elderkin too" began to subside. Daylight quelled the hideous sounds.

The morning brought a strange story to the little army and the panic-stricken villagers.

A mile-and-a-half to the west of the village was a large mill-pond, which furnished water for power to grind the grain for the surrounding country. The miller reported that he had been awakened by the outlandish noises in early evening, and on going to the pond found the frogs in a great state of commotion, but, owing to the intense darkness, nothing could be seen. In the morning many dead frogs were found upon the shore.

No wounds were visible; no marks of violence could be seen; no cause for the strange commotion could be found. Some argued that there had been a battle, but there was never any evidence to support this theory. Others advanced the idea that some mysterious, malarial contagion, some deadly epidemic, had broken out and caused the cries of distress which had driven terror to the hearts of the Windham villagers. This theory, too, has been laughed at, and the truth is that the cause of the great disturbance has always been a dark, impenetrable mystery.

The state of mind of the town's people the next morning can better be imagined than described. All seemed sick with humiliation at the ludicrous ending of their frantic fright of the evening before. Squire Elderkin was particularly mortified, and is reported to have suffered a two-weeks' sickness and confinement to his chamber, during which he was said to have frequently stated that he had much rather have lost his scalp than to have been the victim of such a huge joke.

It is wonderful how the story of the Windham frogs sought out and found every little nook and corner of the country. There were no railroads, no telegraphs or newspapers in those days. The stage-coach was the only means of intercommunication. Yet the story, greatly exaggerated and elaborately dressed up by the imagination, was told and retold in almost every tavern in the land.

The Windham wits had been famous for years. Those who had suffered at their hands now eagerly seized the opportunity to pay back old scores with usurious interest. Ballads were written; songs were composed and sung; and every chance for a practical joke was utilized. Colonel Dyer was a delegate to the first Congress held in New York. During his journey to that city some wag tied an immense frog to the rear of his carriage. His arrival was said to have been greeted with shouts and laughter, and the joke became the talk of the city. On one occasion Squire Elderkin was said to have been

making a very learned and eloquent plea, when some buffoon raised the shout of "Colonel Dyer and Elderkin too," in the long-drawn tones which the frogs had made famous. The judge lost his gravity, the jury laughed, and the audience shouted in the most boisterous manner. The Squire, famous for his self possession, lost his temper, which greatly added to the amusement of the on-lookers.

The humiliation of the Windhamites, however, soon passed away, and they regained their native shrewdness. Colonel Dyer was the first to turn the tide. He adopted the bull-frog as a coat-of-arms; he had a metal frog made for a door-knocker, and in various other ways showed his disposition to accept the situation good-naturedly. The Squire soon saw this was the better way, and felt very kindly toward the Colonel for his tact in stemming the current of popular persecution. He ever after accepted any mention of the frog story with a smile and apparent good-nature, although it was generally believed that the smile was forced and the good-nature was entirely assumed.

The memorable fright had one good effect. Colonel Dyer and Squire Elderkin became fast friends. Peace and good will reigned throughout the community, and the little village has since become noted for the spirit of neighborly kindness and brotherly love which seems to hover over it and pervade the very air.

Others than tennis players will be interested in this amusing story of a man who had greatness thrust upon him in such a way that by it he gained the desire of his heart,—but was made very miserable for awhile. It is from *Belgravia*.

LOVE AND TENNIS.

CHAPTER I.

A WEEK ago to-day I was married to the charmingest, prettiest, and dearest girl in Britain, and to-night I am the most miserable man within the four seas. My wife and I are both perfectly well, no relative has died, I haven't lost any money, and yet I am wretched. *I have been found out by my wife;* and at present she is crying her pretty blue eyes out up-stairs, while I am alternately cursing my weakness and anathematizing my fortune down here. I cannot help thinking that I have a sort of an excuse if Tossy would only listen to me; and I set down here the whole history of our misfortune, in the mournful hope that she may consent to read this, although she may not be willing to hear me speak.

One night last summer I closed the volume that had been delighting me with the talk of the famous eighteenth-century men and women, and as I lay back in my chair in the dusk, I seemed to hear the voices still speaking, and as I heard them, a vast longing came upon me. If the ghosts of by-gone conversations still had such delights for me, should I not feel a vivider joy when the words came from hearts that were yet beating, when the gay jest and sparkling wit flashed from busy brains not yet the spoil of the grave, when the airy laughter and bright smiles illumined lips that were still rosy with life? I had dwelt too long in the printed world; I was becoming stiff and straitened between the boards of my books. Now I should mingle with my fellow-men; now take part in the conversations that perhaps would engage the attention of some peaceful student like myself in the future.

I had lived pretty much alone in the world, so far as contemporaries went. Parents or brethren I had never known; but my father had left me to the care of his brother, and the latter had discharged the trust by having me educated at a private school in England, allowing me to take a leisurely degree at Oxford, and finally leaving me his fortune, which he had acquired in some original way connected with ginger. I had seen him once or twice, but for the greater part of his life he resided at Calcutta. I had always been of a retiring disposition; and the possession of a comfortable fortune, which was managed by my uncle's lawyers, only placed it in my power to gratify my taste for quiet reading and study. I had my name entered at one of the Inns of Court, and had eaten my dinners; but I had no intention of practising at the bar. I should have said that my name is Theodore Lancey. It is very curious to look back upon my former life now. I seem to have been almost a hermit.

I had, and still have, a friend named Fitzjames. He is quite young, never having been out of the nineteenth century; but in certain respects I have found that he is considerably older than I am. Fitzjames prides himself upon being a young man who knows about things—if not a young man of the world, then nothing. It seemed to me that an individual with a special knowledge of the kind he claimed to possess would be of more use to me than priests to Herodotus. He would be the very man to introduce me to my fellow-beings. I accordingly told him of my wishes. "So you've come to air at last," he said; "well, I'm glad to hear it, and I'll show you round all right. What you've got to do first is to learn the name of the ruling sovereign and the dates of the Reform Bill and the Ballot Act. I'm going to run up north to Strathblane Hydropathic Establishment, and if you like, you can come with me. These affairs are all the 'go,' and you'll see lots of character there, and we can take a run round Scotland afterward."

Quite innocent of knowing what hydropathic establishments were, I consented, and in about a week after

my resolution I found myself in the Strathblane Hydropathic Establishment. We arrived late in the afternoon, shortly before dinner, and Fitzjames conducted me after a hasty toilet to the drawing-room of the house. The room, which was very large, was very full, and to my excited eyes seemed at first full only of ladies. I subsided quietly into a corner behind a book, while Fitzjames disappeared elsewhere.

The summons of the gong for dinner was responded to by a general stampede of the occupants of the drawing-room, and I was swept along with the rest to the dining-hall. A compassionate waitress piloted me to the seat apportioned me at the table, and almost immediately Fitzjames dropped into the chair beside me. Dinner at a hydropathic establishment is always a serious matter, and those who are knowing seem to devote all their attention to it for the time. Our neighbors were not interesting, and our vis-à-vis seemed to be too much engrossed to repay advances. It was during dinner that Fitzjames told me that he had met some friends of his, the two Miss Delavels and their aunt Miss Scott, who were spending a short time in Scotland. We could descry the ladies at the other end of the long table at which we sat; and I thought Fitzjames was a lucky fellow to stumble upon such charming acquaintances so soon. He offered to introduce me to them after dinner, but when that time came, I was so overpowered—it is a humiliating confession—with bashfulness that I couldn't summon up courage to enter the drawing-room, but kept uncomfortably vibrating between the billiard-room and the reading-room, which seemed entirely surrendered to the male sex. Fitzjames did not seem to notice my behavior; he probably forgot my existence.

The next morning, after enjoying the more specially hydropathic features of the place, I strolled into the reading-room to glance over the newspapers before breakfast. There were two or three ladies similarly waiting, and shortly afterward I noticed Fitzjames's friends, the Delavels, enter the room. I don't think they saw me, for my face was hidden behind a news-

paper; but my attention was attracted by the sound of my own name—Lancey. It was the younger and more piquant-looking of the sisters, and the one whom secretly I feared the more, who spoke.

The conversation was not loud, but I couldn't help catching stray phrases: "Isn't it jolly?—the famous T. Lancey, you know—in the papers—well-known player—saw his name in the book—and Mr. Fitzjames says—splendid games at tennis—introduce him to-day." I smiled a little to myself; they had made a mistake. If there really were a "famous T. Lancey," I certainly was not he; but I should like very much to know what Fitzjames had said. The breakfast gong interrupted my meditations; and as the young ladies left the room before I did, I was not discovered.

After breakfast Fitzjames conducted me to "see the place," meaning the pleasure grounds, which was his pleasant way of expressing going to find the Misses Delavel, in order to fulfil an engagement to pay lawn-tennis with them. Before we found them I had told him what I had overheard, and he seemed to see in it an immense joke. "Why," said he, "I *do* believe they are confounding you with Tom Lancey, of the Bayswater Tennis Club; a tremendous don at tennis; champion, and all that. That's awfully good. These girls are just mad about tennis; and Miss Lilian, the young one, thinks, I verily believe, that a man's not worth looking at unless he can play tennis." "But," said I, "I can't play tennis; I've only seen it once, and I never had a bat in my hand. You must put them right before you introduce me." I am now sure that, had I not happened to stumble over a stone, I should have seen a sparkle of deviltry in Fitzjames's eyes as he replied, "Oh, that doesn't much matter. Wouldn't it be rather fun to pretend you *are* Tom Lancey, just a little bit? Miss Tossy (that's Lilian's pet name) will be awfully nice to you at first; and of course we'll not be able to carry the joke very far. Besides, they made the mistake first." I positively shuddered at the idea of being mixed up in a jest to be played off upon young ladies; but Fitzjames

wouldn't listen to me, and boisterously laughed all my objections to scorn. He said it would make the introduction ever so much easier, and, assuring me that he would see me through it, reduced me to a miserable acquiescence. I plaintively reminded him that I didn't know a single technical term in the game. But he assured me that didn't matter.

"All you've got to do is not to make any jokes about 'deuce,' or 'love'; you mustn't say anything amusing about 'being in court'; you must avoid all literary allusions to 'love that hath us in the net'; 'they also serve who only stand and wait'; and forget, if possible, the Prince of Wales's motto; and on no account mention the 'coign of vantage.' Further, you must say *racquet*, and not *bat*. If you trespass any of these rules, your reputation as an old player is gone."

This was very awful. I didn't see that it was at all probable that I should ever be tempted to say any of the things Fitzjames mentioned; but I foresaw a very unhappy predicament for myself.

I had not much time for thought, however. We had reached the tennis-lawn, and Fitzjames at once introduced me to Miss Scott and her nieces. Fortunately for me they had their set made up by another young fellow, and I had nothing to do with the game beyond expressing my opinion that it was simply charming and splendidly healthy. I pleaded "letters" as an excuse to leave the ground almost at once, but a promise was extorted from me to return before luncheon. I hurried to the house, dashed off a short note to somebody in order to discharge my conscience, and anxiously plunged into the depths of "Laws of Lawn Tennis," which I had seen in the reading-room. I understood no very great quantity of what I read, but I was determined to master some of it, and I did. There were several people in the room, and as I entered, I caught a suppressed whisper of "the great tennis-player," that drove the blood to my cheeks. Every one seemed to have fallen a victim to the same mistake, for an old gentleman, seeing me with the "Laws," said something about "congenial

literature." I was becoming seriously concerned, and wished passionately that I hadn't consented to countenance the jest, even for a moment. I longed for courage enough to disclaim the honor of being "T. Lancey, the great tennis-player," but I did not know how to begin; while the idea of plunging first thing into explanations with unknown ladies blanched my cheeks.

I was then innocent enough to believe that I must keep my promises; so after waiting within doors as long as I decently could, I returned to the lawn. A new set was going on, and the younger Miss Delavel was resting on one of the chairs under the trees. She signified, in that wonderful tacit way that ladies have, that I was to go to speak with her; and, despite my shyness, I felt not altogether unwilling.

I found, to my intense surprise, that I got on fairly well in conversation with her. I didn't miss the powder and patches of last century so much as I expected, and indeed had mainly to signify my assent to all her rhapsodies about lawn-tennis. She seemed to be very enthusiastic on that point.

"I am very glad you can play, Mr. Lancey; people who can't are *so* stupid, don't you think? I'm sure I should never like any one who couldn't play, so you see, Mr. Lancey, you are fortunate in being able."

This was too much. "I assure you, Miss Delavel, I really cannot."

"Now, Mr. Lancey, please don't. Mr. Fitzjames told us you would probably pretend not to know much about it. But I know all about it; I've seen your name in the papers scores of times."

"But really, I protest, Miss Delavel; I haven't——"

Here I was interrupted by the arrival of the players, who apologized for having played so long, and advised us to lose no time in beginning.

Fitzjames said he would give me his racquet; he had an engagement. I believe it was merely to smoke a cigarette and to avoid playing with the trio. But a substitute was speedily found in young Miss MacBrier. I was in anything but a comfortable frame of mind; I

felt convinced I should do something absurd, and that my false reputation would take away all excuse for it. I was glad, in a dim sort of way, that Miss Lilian was to be my partner against Miss Delavel and Miss MacBrier.

"We play in this court, Mr. Lancey," said Miss Lilian. "Oh, do you always hold your racquet like that?"

"Well, no," I answered guiltily, and somewhat taken aback. "I—I usually hold it like this." I should have said that I never held a racquet in any way before, but I was startled.

"Because, you know," she continued, "some crack players *do* play with the curve downward."

"But, good heavens! you don't really suppose——"

"I dare say we'll teach you, Mr. Lancey"—this with a roguish smile and shake of the head. "Minnie is going to serve; shall I take first?"

"Certainly, just as you please; but where am I to go?"

"Why, there, of course, Mr. Lancey; don't be ridiculous."

I had no intention of being more ridiculous than I could help, but I felt distinctly uncomfortable. Fitzjames must have been indulging in a considerable latitude of statement about me, and the young ladies seemed determined to remain in their first error. It was a disagreeable predicament. As I stood glaring through my spectacles at the trim figures beyond the net, I have no doubt they were just as gracefully animated as they had been in the previous set, but now I only saw that they looked as if they knew perfectly well what to do with their racquets, and that Miss Minnie Delavel was on the point of sending a ball. I was infinitely relieved to find that my partner was to "take," as she put it; and I breathed a mental prayer that I might not have much to do.

The first ball seemed to fly with horrid velocity, and I looked with apprehension at my partner. It stopped, however, in the net. The next serve came over all right, not so swift, and Miss Lilian sent it easily back;

and for two or three flights, I was thankful to note, the ball didn't come near me. I felt that my safety was only for a moment, and sure enough my time came. I saw the ball shoot from Miss MacBrier's racquet, and fly straight toward me. In that awful moment I thought a great deal; not of my sins, but of the humiliation that was about to come upon me before the unusually large company of spectators that had suddenly assembled. I shut my eyes, and, to quote Spenser, "let drive" at the ball. I certainly hit it; for with the concussion my racquet was half turned in my hand.

"Well played, Mr. Lancey," cried my partner, "that was splendidly placed; and how ever did you get such a screw on?"

Miss Delavel had failed to send back the ball, which I had apparently sent over the net; and, it seemed, we had scored fifteen to love.

How pleasant it was to be praised by Miss Tossy! How contemptible it was to be praised undeservedly! Oh that I had boldly avowed that it was a chance, a happy accident, and that I had no credit for the shot! Had Miss Tossy been a man, I should have done so; but to a lady——! Alas! I merely smiled a smile that was meant to be deprecatory, but only succeeded, I am afraid, in being sickly, and answered:

"Not at all, Miss Delavel; I am sure you could have done ever so much better." But Miss Tossy only shook her racquet at me from her own court, and said: "And you said you didn't play!"

"But I protest——" I got no further, for Miss Minnie was on the eve of sending a serve to me. May the heavens be praised! both that and the next serve went into the net, and the game stood love-thirty.

"You see," said my partner, "Minnie was trying to give you an extra-difficult service." Oh, baseness of deceit again! I tried to look as though I were quite ready for the most puzzling serve in Minnie's répertoire. What madness! In what century had I left my brains? I *knew* I should never hit another ball, and yet I weakly sought to gain a temporary credit in Miss Tossy's eyes.

The next serve my partner missed, and we were fifteen-thirty. It was again my turn. I tried to be resigned, but I was horribly agitated. Miss Minnie had determined to try me with what I afterward learned is called a "lob." The ball rose slowly in the air, describing a lofty parabolic arch. It seemed actually to hang in the air. I could hear my heart beating, for I felt that a supreme moment had come. I must either hit that ball or live forever an impostor in the eyes of the nicest girl I had ever seen. I drew my breath quickly; I felt alternately hot and cold; a sort of mist rose over my spectacles. As the ball fell, I smote desperately at it, with an energy that I was far too agitated to control.

A shout of laughter from the spectators brought me to myself with a jerk. Whither the ball had gone I did not know; but, from the direction in which the people were all looking, it seemed to have flown into a shrubbery about one hundred yards behind our opponents. Miss Tossy turned to me.

"Why, Mr. Lancey, are you always so severe upon lob faults? It's too bad of you taking such a swipe. Fault, Minnie!"

"Gracious powers," thought I, "they think I meant to put it out of court." I thought they were laughing at me, but it seems my play was a legitimate joke. I cannot help it now; I must be a tennis-player whether I will or not. I am like Autolycus in the "Winter's Tale." "If I have a mind to be honest, I see Fortune would not suffer me." Thanks to Fortune, the next serve to me was in the net again, and we had forty to our opponents' fifteen. Miss Tossy, however, again failed in returning the serve to her, and we stood thirty-forty.

I was almost completely callous when I knew that I was to "take" again. I should probably find some escape. I seemed to be a favorite of the gods; and though I should probably die young on that account, what mattered it, so long as I maintained my position as a man of skill in the eyes of Miss Delavel? The ball came whizzing over, struck the ground near my feet, and

bounced away I should say about a foot below my racquet.

"What a *shoot*, Minnie!" cried my partner. "I see you weren't prepared for that naughty girl's shoot, Mr. Lancey. You were too confident."

I didn't understand then what a shoot was, but I saw that somehow my miss had not seriously damaged my reputation as a player.

"That's deuce," called out Miss Delavel.

"I beg your pardon?" said I, involuntarily.

"It's deuce; we were thirty-forty, you know, and we scored this time."

I was relieved; it was a technical term, and indeed Fitzjames had warned me of it.

"Play, Tossy!" said Miss Delavel; and the ball came skimming over the net. Tossy did play it, and back it went into the left corner of Miss MacBrier's court. The latter was taken by surprise, she had not expected to have the return, and with a little shriek she dived wildly at the ball.

"Well taken, Miss MacBrier; but I am afraid it's out," cried Fitzjames, who had recently reappeared on the scene, while the ball came flying over my head. I was resolved now, and sprang desperately upward, brandishing my racquet at the ball. I missed.

"Oh, Mr. Lancey, I thought you were going to hit it, and it was out of court," said my partner.

Saved again! It was little short of miraculous. If I had hit the ball, I should have done wrong, apparently; and goodness knows I had done my best to hit it. Well, it was my fate to deceive. I couldn't help it, I was doomed to be "T. Lancey, the great tennis-player"; so I said as confidently as I could, "Of course it was, Miss Delavel, there was no fear of my hitting it."

In one sense it was true enough; but for the sense it conveyed to my partner—oh, that Miss Tossy had said and done to me what Macbeth said and did to the soldier who told him of the approach of Birnam Wood!

"That's vantage to us," she cried, "I *do* believe we'll win. Go on, Minnie." Minnie did go on, and I was

not surprised that my feeble poke resulted in returning the ball just between our adversaries, who each left it alone, under the impression that the other was about to take it.

"That makes game," remarked Miss Tossy. "Thank you very much; you played awfully well, in spite of a strange racquet."

I merely bowed. I felt a glow of shame upon my cheek; and even that, I bitterly thought, would be attributed to my exertions, and not to its true cause, thanks to my miserable good luck. Just at that moment the luncheon-bell rang; and from henceforth forever thanks be to the stern punctuality of hydropathic establishments, and to the unaffected appetite which every one has at luncheon time in these places. I was reprieved. We were all apparently disappointed that our set had come to a premature conclusion; but, as the ladies were going to drive that afternoon, it was agreed that we should finish it Monday forenoon, the next day being Sunday. I assured the young ladies that it would give me much pleasure. Wretch that I was, that very moment I had sworn to myself to devise excuses to avoid ever playing again.

CHAPTER II.

The next day I breathed more freely. The girls, who had very delightful little notions about Sunday behavior, preferred not even to talk about tennis, and so I was free from one fear. Fitzjames and I went to church with them, and on the way thither Miss Tossy, Miss Scott, and I had quite an interesting conversation about the religion of the ancient Peruvians. Perhaps I had more than my share of the talk; but neither of the ladies would say she was tired, and Miss Scott especially thanked me for my improving information, which, she was good enough to say, was so different from the Sunday conversation of other young men. After luncheon we sat in the garden under the trees near the tennis-lawn. I felt delightfully triumphant as

I looked at the last; like a debtor not liable to arrest on Sunday. Miss Tossy noticed my glance, and, with a merry little laugh, cried, "No, Mr. Lancey, you mustn't! I know you are dying for a game, but remember what day it is!" Ah, if she only knew! Again, miserable hypocrite, I had to affect grief for what filled me with unspeakable satisfaction. Oh, that every day were Sunday!

I need not have feared. The ladies had come to the end of their stay at Strathblane, and were going to take a brief tour through the Highlands before meeting their father, Colonel Delavel, at Edinburgh on the following Saturday. Curiously enough, Fitzjames had discovered that we were going by exactly the same route, and had persuaded Miss Scott, who was a little nervous about travelling without an escort, that it would be for every one's advantage to allow us to join and assist her party. We were to start the next forenoon before lunch, "but," said Miss Tossy, "I think we'll be able to finish our set before we start; don't you hope so, Mr. Lancey?"

If the guilt of silently assenting be less black than that of verbally expressing concurrence, I am entitled to the slight advantage. I saw myself plunging deeper and deeper in the mire. I longed to tell Miss Tossy all, but dared not. Coward, I lulled my conscience with sophistries. What need to open her eyes now? A short week and we should part, probably never to meet again; then why cloud the happiness of that week? She had said she could never like any one who couldn't play tennis; it was too much to resign all chance of Miss Tossy's smiles and good opinion. How I envied that other T. Lancey! Would I were he, and a justifiable hero in Miss Tossy's eyes.

On Monday morning I awoke in low spirits. I sprang up, and oh, joy, I was on fortune's cap the very button! It was raining heavily. Blessed climate of Scotland, there would be no tennis. But the trial of wearing a dismal countenance to hide a joyful heart was almost as bad, and even now I cannot think of that morning's greetings without feeling my cheeks burn with shame.

The rain continued all the morning, but shortly after we got into the train the sun struggled through the clouds, and we had a fine afternoon and evening. We had quite a considerable tour marked out for our week, and never shall I forget these delightful days. Fitzjames was a splendidly capable man to travel with, and managed everything, while to me, as a "book man," was intrusted the duty of exhuming the interesting items from the fat green guide-book for the general benefit. I don't suppose guide-books usually move any sentimental regards in the hearts of their possessors, still less when they are heavy and fat; but I cherish an affection for that guide-book that is undying, and never see its corpulent form without feeling as though I beheld an old friend. I felt less nervous than ever, and Miss Scott, Miss Tossy, and I got through an enormous quantity of talk. Thanks to the incidents of travel and to Miss Scott's presence, lawn-tennis did not often come upon the tapis, but, when it did, it gave me a twinge as though my conscience had toothache.

Saturday duly found us in Edinburgh. I had been somewhat nervous about the Colonel. Miss Tossy had assured me more than once that "Papa would be very pleased to see me, and thank me for all my trouble." But there is always a lurking uncertainty about young ladies' papas. Colonel Delavel, who was waiting for us in the Royal Hotel, was not one of your truculent old fellows, with bloodshot eyes and loud voices, but was as quiet and retiring as was consistent with an erect martial figure and a heavy white mustache. He received me very kindly. "Very glad to see you, Mr. Lancey. You've been looking after these two young baggages, I hear. I hope you got on better than I do." I assured him it was a great pleasure, etc. "By the way," he went on, "I wonder whether you are any relation to old Jeremy Lancey in Calcutta, 'Ginger Jeremy' we used to call him." "Yes, Colonel, he was my uncle." "What! you're old Ginger's nephew! I'm delighted to see you. Why, you must be young Theodore Lancey, that got all—— My dear boy, shake hands again."

This was all right; this was a charming sort of "papa." Before the arrival of Fitzjames, who had walked from the Waverley Station, we were on the best of terms. The Colonel insisted on our taking rooms at the Royal; indeed, he secured rooms for us himself before we could make any objections, which neither of us had the remotest intention of doing. We stayed in Edinburgh three or four days, enjoying peerless weather, and charmed with that most beautiful of cities.

When we left Edinburgh, the Colonel to take his girls down to his place in Herts, and Fitzjames and I to further travel, I received a most cordial invitation to visit the Delavels immediately on my return south. For a moment, as I looked at Tossy's blue eyes and pouting lips, I leaned to assent, but when she exclaimed, "Do come, Mr. Lancey, and we'll have some splendid games of tennis," I shuddered at my danger and made my excuses as well as I might. I thought that Tossy looked disappointed, and, had not all the others been present, I believe I should have flung myself on her mercy and revealed all. The Colonel insisted, however, on my promising to visit them at Christmas, and I consented. There could not surely be any tennis at Christmas time.

I did not relapse into the by-gone centuries when I returned to London. I had found my contemporaries so very pleasant that I resolved to take up my permanent abode in the nineteenth century, and revisit my former haunts only occasionally. Fitzjames gave me much help in bringing myself down to date, and indeed I began to like him more than I had ever done before. He knew the Delavels, and was always willing to talk about them, and it is a great assistance to friendship when two fellows like to talk about the same people. He used sometimes to rally me about my tennis, and cry that it wasn't fair of me finding my way into ladies' favor under false colors. I never could summon up courage to tell him how serious a matter it was to me, and by and by he forgot all about it. I practised tennis very diligently, for though I knew, of course, that I could not continue under my present character, as cham-

pion, still Miss Tossy had said she didn't think she could like any one who couldn't play, and I resolved to emerge from that category at all hazards. I joined a suburban club, and several times I went to see the real T. Lancey play; and when I saw what Miss Tossy had thought me able to perform, I almost swooned. The glaring difference was too frightful.

Christmas week came at last, and with it a cordial note from the Colonel, repeating his invitation. The note ended with a regret that there would be no tennis, unless I insisted upon playing in the snow, but he dared say they would be able to make me forget my passion for a week or so, with other amusements.

Bumaloe Hall was a fine old country-house, rechristened by the Colonel. It was attached to a small estate, and contained all the devices for securing comfort that an old colonial could imagine. The house was filled with Christmas guests, and, as I expected, Fitzjames was one of these. I received a hearty welcome; the Colonel was kindness itself, and the young ladies were, if possible, prettier than ever. Lilian, I thought, looked especially bewitching, and I imagined I perceived just the faintest little blush on her cheeks as she shook hands with me.

The blackness of my deceit loomed darker and darker in my mind's eye the longer I thought of the Delavels' kindness, and I resolved to discharge my conscience as soon as possible and take the consequences. I felt that I could make my confession only to Miss Tossy; with the others my tennis character had not been so prominent. I arrived in the afternoon two days after Christmas, and in the evening there was to be a ball at Bumaloe Hall. Fitzjames, among his other good offices, had impressed upon me the necessity of learning to dance, if I were going to remain in this century, and while we were waiting for the guests from outside, I found that my step exactly suited Miss Tossy's. She would not give me many dances, and I was forced to content myself with two waltzes and "the Lancers."

My two waltzes with Miss Tossy were simply deli-

cious; but at "the Lancers" we found we were an odd couple, all the sets being completed. I was not very sorry, and we strolled into the conservatory to escape from the heat of the dancing-room. We talked of our travels in Scotland and of all the little incidents that had made them so pleasant. Tossy innocently remarked, "Isn't it curious, Mr. Lancey, that we have never contrived to finish that set at tennis? I *do* so long to see you play properly, you know. You have been playing a good deal in London, haven't you?" I thanked my stars that to this question I could truthfully answer "Yes"; there were not many questions about tennis that I could answer truthfully. "Yes, I've heard a good deal about you. Bab Fraser told me all about the tournament, and how splendidy you beat Mr. Martin." This was becoming awful. I had seen that tournament, and I had seen the real Lancey defeat Martin, a feat that I was hopelessly incapable of. The error must be cleared up now, at once. I should seize the opportunity; that conservatory should be the scene of my confession. But alas! as I began, my cursed nervousness came upon me like a flood. "Miss Tossy, Miss Delavel, I should like—I mean, I must say something about that tennis. I'm not—that is—you mistake what——"

I had stammered thus far when I was interrupted by the sudden appearance of Miss Delavel and Fitzjames. The former looked exceedingly rosy, while the latter walked coolly up to Tossy, kissed her, and said, "Well, sister Tossy, may I take a brother's privilege?" For an instant the girls looked at each other, and then Tossy rushed at her sister, crying, "Oh, Minnie, I'm so glad!" There wasn't time for any domestic felicitations, however, for "the Lancers" had come to an end, and the dancers began to make their way into the conservatory.

I was as glad as any one at the news of Fitzjames's engagement to Miss Delavel, but I could not help wishing that he had chosen another time for declaring himself. However, a few days later, I was afforded a new opportunity for confession by Miss Tossy, who, apropos of a letter she had received, asked me some

questions about tennis, and then, without waiting for the reply, went on, "Oh, by the way, Mr. Lancey, you were going to tell me something about lawn-tennis the other night, in the conservatory, you remember?"

To have a pretty young lady remember for three days what he has said to her is a compliment fitted to turn any average young man's head. And seeing that the pretty young lady in this case was looking specially bewitching in some sort of fur arrangement, that there was no one else in sight, and that I had to return to London in a couple of days, what wonder that I forgot all about my good resolutions, and, neglecting this magnificent opening for my confession, stammered out:

"I remember, Miss Delavel; but before that—I mean I have something else, Miss Lilian—wouldn't you like to be like your sister—that is—oh, Tossy, I have loved you ever since I saw you at Strathblane! Will you be my wife?"

If any one wishes to see a beautiful girl look her very best, let him get her to consent to be his wife in the frosty light of a winter sunset; for I vow I never saw Tossy looking more lovely than when she shyly promised to share my life. I am not going to attempt to reduce to the painful distinctness of grammatical sentences the conversation that ensued, and that made us both miss afternoon tea. For some all too brief moments I was the happiest of men. But there was still the lurking adder to sting me in my joy. Nestling her soft cheek against my coat, Tossy murmured: "And I'm so proud of your lawn-tennis too; I really think it was that that made me like you first."

"What, Tossy, *like?*"

"Yes," said Tossy, mutinously; "it was like, for I didn't love you till long after, sir; but I don't believe I should *ever* have cared for you if you hadn't been such a good player."

A cold shudder passed over me as I listened. Good Heavens, what had I brought upon myself! I quailed before the revelation that must ensue. Had I a right to clasp that form in my arms in such deceit? How I

cursed my weakness, my folly, my deceit! And yet, had I not won a wife?

A man who has just been accepted is generally bold enough to face a raging lion, much less a gentlemanly "papa." And before the glory of my afternoon's walk died away in me, I had an interview with the Colonel. He guessed my object and helped me out a good deal, and seemed as relieved and as satisfied as I was when the interview was over. I only wish all men found "the papas" as agreeable. I arranged, of course, to stay a few days longer than I had originally intended; and though my conscience often interrupted my peace, Tossy and I had a variety of other subjects than tennis to talk about. The Colonel was to return to India in April, and, after much persuasion and argument, it was agreed he should see each of his daughters provided with a special protector before he sailed. We were to be married on April 16.

The interval passed, I suppose, at the rate of one day every twenty-four hours; and as I had naturally a good deal to do, including the bringing out of my book on "Comparative Mythology," it passed with tolerable rapidity. The Colonel came up to London to look after his affairs, but his town-house had no tennis-lawn; and by continued good-luck I escaped having to reveal my duplicity. For I had doggedly argued myself into the determination to keep silent on the point for the present. It would be exceedingly bad taste to obtrude such a disagreeable matter on the few weeks yet left before our marriage. Besides, it would be so much easier after we were married; there should be no difficulty in confessing to the wife of one's bosom.

Time passed on. The 16th of April arrived, and we were married, just a week ago to-day. We have to content ourselves with a very short honeymoon, for we must return to see the Colonel before he sails for India. Tossy wished to visit Edinburgh again, and here in Edinburgh we arrived two days ago. What misery it would have spared me if only the last visit to Edinburgh had seen me in my true colors; it was reserved for this

occasion to unmask me! This evening, after dining at six, I went out to post a note from Tossy to her father, while she stayed behind to look at the London papers which had just arrived. When I returned she greeted me with a curious little laugh, and exclaimed: "Isn't this funny, Theo? Here's quite a long account of a tennis-match played yesterday by Mr. T. Lancey against Mr. Martin. They don't seem to know that T. Lancey was quite otherwise engaged."

I saw at once that Nemesis had run me down. The time for explanation had come, and, instead of having the advantage of making a voluntary confession, I was driven to it; and Tossy would never believe that I had intended to confess. I suppose my horror must have appeared in my face, for Tossy looked quite frightened.

"What is the matter, Theo—it's just a mistake, I suppose?"

"I can explain it," said I, in a hollow voice. "I am not that T. Lancey."

"Then there are two great players of that name? How odd!"

"No, Tossy, you have been mistaken about me all the time. I'm not a tennis-player at all."

"Oh, Theo, what do you mean? I saw you playing myself."

"I never had a racquet before in my hand." And desperation aiding me, I related to Tossy in a few words the whole miserable history, not sparing myself. Poor Tossy looked at first incredulous and almost amused, but then her expression changed, and she buried her face in her handkerchief. When I had finished I was too humiliated to plead for myself; but when I attempted to take Tossy's hand, she drew it away, and, turning her back upon me, said:

"So, then, you have been deceiving us all the time, and you can't play one bit? And I was so proud of your being such a good player, and wrote to everybody, and——"

Here a sob interrupted poor Tossy, but she recovered herself, and went on, still with face averted:

"I think it was horrible of you to marry me like that under false pretences; and papa will be very angry; and I don't believe now that I'm really married to you at all; I—I thought you were quite different."

Here Tossy fairly broke down, and ran from the room with her handkerchief before her eyes. I had been unable to say a word for myself; I was too wretched. I followed Tossy up stairs, but she had locked the door of her room, and told me to go away and not speak to her, which I was sorrowfully constrained to do, for a man cannot well expostulate with his wife from the public corridor of a hotel. I could only return in misery to our sitting-room. Is this, then, the issue of Fitzjames's hateful joke? Have I wrecked my life's happiness for that? Would Tossy ever love me again, or would she insist on living apart from me? Are all my dreams of sweet home life with my dainty little wife merely idle dreams and nothing more? I feel crushed, and yet cannot repine at the severity of my sentence. A week married, and I am sitting here thus, and Tossy in tears up stairs!

I could write no more, but laying down my pen, and hiding my face in my hands, thought bitterly of the loss of our happiness. As I sat thus, the door opened, a light little figure entered the room, two soft white arms stole round my neck before I could turn, and Tossy was in my arms, laughing and kissing me by turns, and looking as bright and saucy and merry as ever.

"You dear old goose," she said, with an "interruption," "did you really think that I didn't know all that before? I knew perfectly well all about your trying to pass off as a great tennis-player. Fitzjames told us. And the idea that I would care for any one simply because he could play tennis! Oh, you stupid old dear. And you deserved to be punished for never confessing, though I could hardly help laughing at your doleful tale, poor old man, and had to run away. But I'm sorry you took it so much to heart, and now I shall reward you. You may kiss me if you like!"

The marked tendency of M. de Maupassant to use the motive of fear in his tales is exemplified anew in the following effective and nerve-trying ghost-story, translated by V. E. T. for the San Francisco *News Letter*.

AN APPARITION.

In speaking of a recent lawsuit, our conversation had turned on sequestration, and each of us, thereupon, had a story to tell—a story affirmed to be true. We were a party of intimate friends, who had passed a pleasant evening, now drawing to a close, in an old family residence of the Rue de Grenelle. The aged Marquis de la Tour-Samuel, bowed 'neath the weight of eighty-two winters, at last rose, and, coming to lean on the mantel-piece, said, in somewhat trembling tones:

I, also, know something strange, so strange that it has been a haunting memory all my life. It is now fifty-six years since the incident occurred, and yet not a month has passed in which I have not seen it again in a dream, so great is the impression of fear it has left on my mind. For ten minutes I experienced such horrible fright that ever since a sort of constant terror has made me tremble at unexpected noises; and objects, half-seen in the gloom of night, inspire me with a mad desire to take flight. In short, I am afraid of the dark.

Oh! I would not have avowed that before having reached my present age. Now I can say anything. I have never receded before real danger, ladies; it is, therefore, permissible, at eighty-two years of age, not to be brave over an imaginary danger.

That affair so completely upset me, caused me such lasting and mysterious uneasiness, that I never spoke of it to any one. I will now tell it to you exactly as it happened, without any attempt at explanation.

In July, 1827, I was in garrison at Rouen. One day, as I was walking on the quay, I met a man whom I thought I recognized, without being able to recall exactly who he was. Instinctively, I made a movement

to stop; the stranger perceived it and at once extended his hand.

He was a friend to whom I had been deeply attached as a youth. For five years I had not seen him; he seemed to have aged half a century. His hair was quite white, and he walked bent over as though completely worn out. He apparently comprehended my surprise, for he told me of the misfortune which had shattered his life.

Having fallen madly in love with a young girl, he had married her, but, after a year of more than earthly happiness, she died, suddenly, of an affection of the heart. He had left his château on the very day of her burial and had come to live at Rouen. There he took up his abode, more dead than alive, desperate and solitary, exhausted by grief, and so miserable that he thought constantly of suicide.

"Since I have found you again, at this time," said he, "I will ask you to render me an important service. It is to go and get for me at my home, from the desk of my bedroom—our bedroom—some papers which I greatly need. I cannot send a servant or a man of affairs, as discretion and absolute silence are necessary. As for myself, nothing on earth would induce me to re-enter that house. I will give you the key of the room, which I myself locked on leaving, and the key of my desk, also a few words for my gardener, telling him to open the château for you. But come and breakfast with me to-morrow, and we will arrange all that."

I promised to do him the slight favor he asked. It was, for that matter, nothing of a trip, his property being but a few miles distant from Rouen, and easily reached in an hour on horseback.

At ten o'clock the following day I breakfasted, tête-à-tête, with my friend, but he scarcely spoke. He begged me to pardon him; the thought of the visit I was about to make to that room, the scene of his dead happiness, overwhelmed him, he said. He, indeed, seemed singularly agitated and preoccupied, as though undergoing some mysterious mental combat.

At length he explained to me exactly what I had to do. It was very simple. I must take two packages of letters and a roll of papers from the first drawer on the right of the desk, of which I had the key. He added:

"I need not beg you to refrain from glancing at them."

I was wounded at that remark, and told him so somewhat sharply. He stammered:

"Forgive me, I suffer so," and tears came to his eyes.

At about one o'clock I took leave of him to accomplish my mission.

The weather was glorious, and I trotted over the fields, listening to the songs of the larks and the rhythmical striking of my sword against my boot. Then I penetrated the forest and walked my horse. Branches of the trees caressed my face as I passed, and, now and then, I caught a leaf with my teeth, from sheer gladness of heart at being alive and strong on such a radiant day.

As I approached the château, I took from my pocket the letter I had for the gardener, and was astonished at finding it sealed. I was so irritated that I was about to turn back without having fulfilled my promise, but reflected that I should thereby display undue susceptibility. My friend's state of mind might easily have caused him to close the envelope without noticing that he did so.

The manor seemed to have been abandoned for twenty years. The open gate was dropping from its hinges; the walks were overgrown with grass, and the flower-beds were no longer distinguishable.

The noise I made by tapping loudly on a shutter brought an old man from out a door near by, who seemed stunned with astonishment at seeing me. On receiving my letter, he read it, re-read it, turned it over and over, looked me up and down, put the paper in his pocket, and finally enunciated:

"Well! what is it you wish?"

I replied shortly:

"You ought to know, since you have just read your master's orders. I wish to enter the château."

He seemed overcome.

"Then you are going in—in her room?"

I began to lose patience.

"Of course; but is that your affair?"

He stammered in confusion:

"No—sir,—but it is because—that is, it has not been opened since—since the—death. If you will be kind enough to wait five minutes, I will go to—to see if——"

I interrupted him, angrily:

"See here, what do you mean with your tricks? You know very well you cannot enter the room, since here is the key!"

He no longer objected.

"Then, sir, I will show you the way."

"Show me the staircase and leave me. I'll find my way without you."

"But—sir—indeed——"

That time I silenced him effectually, pushed him aside, and went into the house.

I first traversed the kitchen, then two rooms occupied by the servant and his wife. Next, by a wide hall, I reached the stairs, which I mounted, and recognized the door indicated by my friend.

I easily opened it and entered. The apartment was so dark that, at first, I could distinguish nothing. I stopped short, my nostrils penetrated by that disagreeable, moldy odor of long-unoccupied rooms. Then, as my eyes slowly became accustomed to the darkness, I saw, plainly enough, a large and disordered bedroom, the bed without sheets, but still retaining its mattresses and pillows, on one of which was a deep impression, as though an elbow or a head had recently rested there.

The chairs all seemed out of place. I noticed that a door, doubtless that of a closet, had remained half-open.

I first went to the window, which I opened to let in the light; but the fastenings of the shutters had grown so rusty that I could not move them. I even tried to break them with my sword, but without success. As I was growing irritated over my useless efforts, and could now see fairly well in the semi-obscurity, I renounced the hope of more light, and went over to the writing-table.

I seated myself in an arm-chair, and, letting down the lid of the desk, I opened the designated drawer. It was full to the top. I needed but three packages, which I knew how to recognize, and began searching for them.

I was straining my eyes in the effort to read the superscriptions, when I seemed to hear, or rather feel, something rustle back of me. I paid no attention, believing that a draught from the window was moving some drapery. But, in a minute or so, another movement, almost imperceptible, sent a strangely disagreeable little shiver over my skin. It was so stupid to be affected, even slightly, that self-respect prevented my turning around. I had then found the second packet I needed and was about to lay my hand on the third, when a long and painful sigh, uttered just over my shoulder, made me bound like a madman from my seat and land several feet off. As I jumped I had turned about, my hand on the hilt of my sword, and, truly, had I not felt it at my side, I should have taken to my legs like a coward.

A tall woman, dressed in white, stood gazing at me from the back of the chair where I had been sitting an instant before.

Such a shudder ran through all my limbs that I nearly fell backward. No one can understand, unless he has felt it, that frightful, unreasoning terror! The mind becomes vague; the heart ceases to beat; the entire body grows as limp as a sponge.

I do not believe in ghosts, nevertheless I completely gave way to a hideous fear of the dead; and I suffered, oh! more in a few moments than in all the rest of my life, from the irresistible anguish of supernatural fright. If she had not spoken, I should have died, perhaps! But she spoke; she spoke in a sweet, sad voice, that set my nerves vibrating. I dare not say that I became master of myself and recovered my reason. No! I was so frightened that I scarcely knew what I was doing; but a certain innate pride, a remnant of soldierly instinct, made me, almost in spite of myself, maintain

a creditable countenance. I was posing for myself and for her, undoubtedly for her, no matter what she was, woman or phantom. I understood all that later, for at the moment I thought of nothing; I was afraid.

She said: "Oh! sir, you can render me a great service!"

I wanted to reply, but it was impossible for me to pronounce a word. Only a vague sound came from my throat.

She continued: "Will you? You can save me, cure me. I suffer frightfully. I suffer, oh! how I suffer!" and she slowly seated herself in my arm-chair, still looking at me.

"Will you?" she said.

I replied "Yes" by a nod, my voice still being paralyzed.

Then she held out to me a tortoise-shell comb, and murmured:

"Comb my hair, oh! comb my hair; that will cure me; it must be combed. Look at my head—how I suffer; and my hair pulls so!"

Her hair, unbound, very long and very black, it seemed to me, hung over the back of the chair and touched the floor.

Why did I receive that comb with a shudder, and why did I take in my hands the long black hair that gave to my skin a frightful, cold sensation, as though I had handled snakes? I cannot tell.

That sensation has remained in my fingers, and I still tremble in recalling it.

I combed her hair. I handled, I know not how, those icy locks. I twisted, knotted and unknotted, and braided them. She sighed, bowed her head, seemed happy. Suddenly she said: "Thank you!" snatched the comb from my hands, and fled by the door that I had noticed ajar.

Left alone, I experienced for several seconds the horrible agitation of one who awakens from a nightmare. At length I regained my senses; I ran to the window, and with a mighty effort burst open the shutters, letting

a flood of light into the room. Immediately I sprang to the door by which that being had departed. I found it closed and immovable.

Then a mad desire to flee overcame me like a panic, the panic which soldiers know in battle. I seized the three packets of letters on the open secretary; ran from the room, dashed down the stairs, found myself outside, I know not how, and, perceiving my horse a few steps off, leaped into the saddle and galloped away.

I stopped only when I reached Rouen and before my lodgings. There I shut myself into my room to reflect. For an hour I anxiously strove to convince myself that I had been the victim of an hallucination. I was about ready to believe all I had seen a vision, an error of my senses, when, as I approached the window, my eyes fell, by chance, upon my breast. Around the buttons of my uniform were entwined a quantity of long, black hairs! One by one, with trembling fingers, I plucked them off and threw them away.

I then called my orderly, feeling unable to see my friend that day; wishing, also, to reflect more fully upon what I ought to tell him. I had his letters carried to him, for which he gave the soldier a receipt. He asked after me most particularly, and, on being told I was ill—had had a sunstroke—appeared exceedingly anxious. Next morning I went to him, determined to tell him the truth. He had gone out the evening before and not yet returned. I called again during the day; my friend was still absent. After waiting a week longer without news of him, I advised the authorities, and a judicial search was instituted. Not the slightest trace of his whereabouts or manner of disappearance was discovered.

A minute inspection of the abandoned château revealed nothing of a suspicious character. There was no indication that a woman had been concealed there.

After those fruitless researches all further efforts were abandoned, and in the fifty-six years since then I have heard nothing; I know nothing more.

Frank Valesh has adapted from the Hungarian for ROMANCE the following electioneering story. Thus we learn that "bosses," bribery, and political chicanery are not confined to our own country. Hungary, indeed, seems to be considerably ahead of America in the management of some of these matters. At least, it is not common in American literature to find stories in which love and politics are so closely blended as in this unique sketch.

BEFORE THE HIGH COURT.

MAY it please the high court, I was a clerk in the bailiwick. It happened that the elections for the Reichstag were approaching. In our district the election promised to be very quiet—so we thought. The indications were that Count Pally would have no opposition.

"You will not drink this year, good neighbors," was the cry with which the village notaries would alarm the people.

Even the District Judge at one time, while driving past the glass works in Malmo, shouted to the proprietor from his buckboard: "Herr Kirner, you will find it more profitable this year to blow preserve-glasses only."

All these rumors spread in our mountains like fire; aye, like a veritable burning soot, oppressing the entire neighborhood. "There will be no campaign. And why not?"

All sorts of reasons were offered. Some said the king had transferred the kingdom to his wife, and that excellent lady had a positive distaste for brawls and orgies. Another report had it that the nobility had incurred too many debts at the country inns during the last election, and could have no further credit until the old scores were settled. Here was a reason why the poor must go dry. In this latter rumor was at least a little truth. The indifference was such that only a few voters were registered in the election records. "Votes will have no price," the people would say, as though they were discussing the price of oats or any other marketable product. Only the notorious politician, red-headed Michael

Terep, would insist: "It's utterly impossible, boys. Grass never grows without rain."

Vain talk. The count felt himself on perfectly sound legs, even to the extent of recently going to Vienna to have one amputated, because it had been bitten by a bear while out hunting. It was arranged with the deputy marshal, Thomas Nagy, that the count need not come home; the election certificates would be forwarded by post.

"The whole election won't cost ten groschen," the people said. "The likes of this the world never saw."

All this was going on, when one afternoon the deputy summoned me before him. A person's heart—when the person is only the bailiwick clerk—will beat with fear when he is called before the mighty lord of the district.

"Is the deputy alone?" I asked the *heyduk* (porter).

"The young lady is with him."

"Which young lady?"

"The thin one," he replied carelessly; thereby meaning to convey the information that the slender Anna was with her father, and not the plumper, lighter-haired Marie.

The deputy's official apartments were in the second wing of the district mansion. With heavy heart and mind oppressed, I open the door.

"Servus," saluted the deputy, still conversing with his daughter. She wore a small white straw hat tied with a blue ribbon. On the table lay an album, which we minor officials had presented to the deputy on his last birthday. Absent-mindedly I took up the book and began turning the leaves. It happened that I had just reached my own picture when the deputy addressed me.

"Yes, I sent for you. Now you may go, dear Anna. I have a small affair to dispose of with this friend."

Anna turned her fair, fresh face toward me and pouted her lips in a wilful manner. "No, no," she said shaking her head. "I would rather wait for you, papa." And she unfastened her gray cloak and laid it over the back of a chair.

"Then we will go to the next room," replied the deputy, opening the door. He was of a peculiar build, and had an unusually long head, covered with gray hair, though his eyes still had the sparkle of youth; his eyebrows were drawn; the square lips indicated cunning; and he was spoken of as a man of wide experience and sound judgment, who never spoke the truth.

"I rely on your discretion in the matter which I am about to lay before you," he said tersely and with considerable emphasis.

"What can this mean!" I mentally ejaculated.

He then stated briefly that all he required of me was to have a few gay evenings at the public inn. That was all. An unusual fear took possession of me, nevertheless. He continued: "In war, money is required, and what we are about to undertake is also a war. Some day, perhaps, our little scheme will see the light of day; but it will be better if it does not." Then he added, looking at me significantly. "The sinews of war I will furnish myself."

He gave me a piercing look, and then, tapping me confidentially on the shoulder, said: "The fact is, *amatia*, we have no money. We are in debt, regular beggars. Nor is the bailiwick the fat milch cow it once was; and the nobility are growing poorer. It was far different in my youth. Nowadays even the sugar is not so sweet. And, good Lord, what powerful noblemen we were! One evening I was sitting in a loge in the court theatre in Vienna, when the door suddenly opened after the second act, and King Ferdinand's chamberlain delivered a message, stating that his majesty, who was sitting opposite, requested me to slightly turn the ring on my finger, as the lustre of the setting blinded his majesty's eyes."

"And did your worship comply with the request?"

"Of course I did, my friend," he replied with a benevolent air. "I am a loyal subject, and in those days I was not a deputy marshal."

In telling these stories, he assumed such an air of childish simplicity and innocence that one could almost

believe him. He again returned to his plan. It required no sacrifice. It was a mere trifle. I was to invite my comrades to make lots of noise and have a few people arrested for causing a disturbance. After continuing this for a few nights, I was to induce the crowd to cheer for some candidate.

"Candidate? we have one."

"Oh, be not alarmed, my friend; that is not your affair. Now, now, why that strange look?"

"But I do not understand."

"You are not supposed to; this is higher politics. And if you did, I would either have you locked up or place you in my position. The district has room for only one statesman."

Just then the door creaked and Anna put her head in the room. "Come, come, papa!" she cried impatiently.

"I'll be along soon," said the deputy, stirring uneasily.

"I will not wait."

"Just a moment, dear."

"Not one moment!" and she stamped her foot angrily.

"Oh, the angry little minx!" he said. "Just look at her. I'll tell you, my friend; wait here a moment. I will take her to do some shopping and return soon."

As she retired, Anna bowed slightly. A gentle smile was playing about her lips, and I felt as if a sunbeam had entered the room. The blood rushed to my head, but why? It was such a slight recognition! All trembling, I walked to the outer room and sank into a chair. That smile had somehow agitated me. A rare fragrance, a faint breath of perfume from her hair, and the rustle of her garments still remained. I seem to feel how they struggled with the tobacco-smoke and the musty atmosphere.

"Here she stood, this way she went!" I felt instinctively where she walked. And as I sat wrapped in my thoughts, I began listlessly to turn the leaves of the album. There passed before me even unto weariness all the familiar faces; the second deputy, renowned for

his memory; the bailiwick justice; the keeper of archives, with the features of a sheep; the assistant notaries.—Oh, heavens, do my eyes deceive me? What has become of my picture? It was here half-an-hour ago. I saw it, I had my hands on it. With feverish haste I again turned over the leaves; but my picture was gone. There was no doubt about it.

"Anna must have taken the picture. Oh, lovely Anna! Why, no one else has been in the room." My happiness nearly overcame me. I wanted to fly, but knew not whither. On a chair lay an ear-trumpet, which the deputy used in speaking with the deaf clerk. I shouted into it: "She loves me! She loves me!" I presume this was the height of folly, for the deputy just then entered and in a surprised tone asked: "Did you call?"

"I—I was only trying the trumpet," I stammered, blushing like a peony.

"Yes, yes," he said. "Time drags heavily. I was helping Anna to do some shopping. To-morrow I intend to take my family to the baths at R——. Those storekeepers would cheat an angel if he were not on his guard. I will return the day after to-morrow. Till then see to it that everything turns out well. Here are a hundred florins."

"And for whom shall we shout?" I asked uneasily.

"I will leave that to you. Be careful that he is neither too silly nor too wise."

Everything seemed to pass before me as in an impenetrable mist. Finally I regained my composure. "Why, what is asked of me is, after all, not so very difficult," I murmured.

And in fact, after a successful night's orgy, we had a candidate—the good-natured burgher, Herr Peter Toth, who, when in his cups, was fond of discussing politics. I do not know why his name suggested itself at the time. Only twice—three times we shouted it as we paraded the street behind a band.

Immediately the servants and others, who had not yet retired, peered out of different doorways, and the

apprentices began crowding out from various courts and alleys, their sharp, squeaky voices blending with those of my wine-inspired comrades in yelling: "Long live our candidate, Peter Toth!"

I gave one apprentice two dimes to climb the statue of St. John Nepomuk and place in its hand a large placard bearing the legend: "Christians, vote for your friend, Peter Toth."

There was not the slightest doubt but that this would produce a deep impression on the superstitious voters. In a short time the crowd arrived at Peter Toth's house and began to make considerable noise. Before long a window opened and a woman's head, incased in a night-cap, was seen.

"What sort of bedlam is this?" she cried in a hoarse voice.

"Long live our candidate, Peter Toth!" shouted the crowd, and the gypsy band began playing the Rakoszy march.

"Are you gone daft, good people? What is the meaning of all this?" scolded Frau Toth from the window. "You may thank your stars I cannot see you in the dark, but I tell you," she cried, raising her voice, "you had better move quickly, or I will throw these two flower-pots at your devoted heads, *canaille.*"

"We want to hear Peter Toth."

"Peter Toth is not home. Peter Toth is in Multania buying hogs; but if Peter Toth were home, he would be in bed, and, moreover, he is too law-abiding to deal with all kinds of good-for-nothings. Leave my house, or I will be out with a spade, and you will remember the candidacy of Peter Toth till your dying days!" She hurriedly slammed the window,—but the candidacy of Peter Toth was established. Next day it was the talk of the town, of course amid much merriment.

The deputy returned on the third day; he smiled knowingly when told what had taken place. He tapped me on the shoulder in a patronizing way and bade me continue the affair; and then sent Count Pally the following telegram: "Affairs look dark; the opposition

has agreed on the candidacy of the popular Peter Toth." In the evening he received this answer: "How much money shall I send?"

I discovered all this later; Thomas Nagy never betrayed his political moves. He alone dealt, cut and trumped, and let no one see his cards.

He then wrote the thoroughly alarmed Pally that the situation could not be regarded lightly; the party owes fifteen thousand florins since last election; as long as this debt exists, nothing can be done. It would be the course of wisdom to pay this fifteen thousand florins.

What else remained for him to do, but by return post to send twenty thousand florins; fifteen thousand to settle the old score and five thousand to begin a new credit.

Suffice it to say that Thomas Nagy desired nothing better. At the party caucus the deputy opened his well-filled wallet, thus enabling the nobles to pay the campaign debts which for the past three years had been the cause of much distress. His small eyes twinkled triumphantly: "See how providential it is to have a statesman for a deputy."

This would have ended the comedy had not the count himself become troublesome. It was in vain that the deputy wrote several times, assuring him that the danger had been averted; still the count would not be pacified. What if Peter Toth were pursuing a still hunt? What if the opposition were organizing secretly, and should at the last moment bring about his defeat? "I demand that every voter be taken to the polling-place at my expense," he wrote.

How could he know what we knew?—That Peter Toth was in Multania buying pigs;—and how could we know what Frau Toth knew?—That her lord never saw Multania and was sitting at his own fireside, wrestling with his mortification and chagrin.

The deputy, however, did not lose his customary tact; but carried on a hot campaign; to all appearance as dignified as the count could desire. So it came to pass that Michael Terep spoke the truth when he said that grass did not grow without rain.

I was assigned the task of bringing the voters from the northern districts. (There were only 230 voters.) This apathy was due to the early rumors that votes would have no value. The deaf clerk was sent into the lower district, in which were but seventy voters, who could comfortably be carried in twenty wagons. The journey was very interesting, and in every village I was received with unbounded enthusiasm. Incidentally, however, I carried two wagon-loads of provisions, tobacco and liquors. At one place, I was received with an elaborate speech. At another came Michael Terep, wearing a fur-lined cloak and surrounded by his neighbors. In his hand he carried a shabby banner and at his side a rusty sword.

"I knew it! I knew it all the time!" he cried with tears in his eyes. "The Lord is still on high, my countrymen."

Then he offered his services for life or death.

"Thanks, thanks, friend Michael. You will help me to hire the wagons."

"Wagons?"

"Yes, to bring the voters to the election to-morrow evening."

Michael opened his eyes in surprise and said peevishly, "You don't mean to gather the voters to-morrow. That is impossible. Why, a voter is only pliable when fattened, and at least four weeks is required for that process, just as for fattening a goose."

"But the election takes place the day after to-morrow."

"Aye, aye," he sighed, rubbing his ear, "and who is really the gracious candidate?"

"Oh, that matters not. There is but one, and hence they will not get the name wrong."

"And does he possess sufficient patriotism?"

"He will compare with any one. Every voter will get his fill of provisions, tobacco and liquors, and a fee of five florins." Still, this did not seem to be sufficient. "A sparse feast!" he growled, twitching his nose, but finally tied his horse to the provision cart and climbed on top.

We started at the furthest village, and gathered the voters, one by one, as we drove.

The cavalcade grew large as we drew nearer our destination. Some of the well-to-do peasants drove four colts hitched together, while others had their oxen, which were decorated with flowers and foliage. Thus we passed the villages, the people everywhere rushing out amid shouting and cheering. The voters in the carts shouted "Eljen!" (long live), though none of them knew who was to "long live."

Michael was right in saying that it was necessary to train them to know their owner.

The provision-carts stopped every fifteen minutes. The voters jumped from their seats to refill their canteens. One barrel was emptied before sundown. Then occurred an accident. In the neighborhood of Travnick, opposite the R—— baths, one of the heavy carts toppled over into the brook, the barrel and boxes of tobacco rolled off, the barrel broke, and the whiskey mingled with the water.

It was a mere rill, a span wide, running lazily through the meadows; and it certainly never dreamed that it would one day be metamorphosed into whiskey.

On noticing the catastrophe, the voters stumbled over each other in their haste to get to the brook. They scooped up the mixture in their wide hats and drank it.

"Excellent! Splendid!" cried one, lying on his stomach and drinking the rare fluid.

The maidens also began to be attracted from their spinning-wheels. They came bringing their ornamented tumblers and, lifting modestly their skirts, they carefully crossed the brook with their snowy-white feet.

"Alas, the poor fishes! The whiskey will burn their stomachs!" they cried. They dipped up the water, and with coquettish playfulness touched the cups to their lips.

One old woman ran along the creek wringing her hands. "Where are your senses, good people? Come quickly and save what may be saved; build a dam over here. Don't let the water get away."

The peasants liked this sage advice and more than twenty ran to dam the brook.

Michael stood gloomily watching the scene, and while the others were trying to repair the cart, he seemed to be taking a high moral view of the situation.

Presently he turned away to talk with two slender peasant maidens, who were curious spectators of the picturesque scene. Their feet were encased in natty red boots, and they had large dotted veils thrown over their heads.

"So-ho my maids!" cried Michael. "Yes, you, my children, come a little nearer and tell me if there is a dram-shop near by where we could get much, very much whiskey. I doubt it, as 'tis said the landlord of yonder inn is a mere beggar who buys his alcohol in the city, a pint at a time."

The girls looked at each other in alarm and tried to run away.

"Oh, ho, my dears!" jeered Michael. "People will think you have been pilfering the carts." And running after them, he jocosely put his arms about them. One of the girls began to cry, but the other took a firm hold of Michael's red hair and began tugging at it with might and main. Meanwhile I thought I heard her call my name. My curiosity was aroused and I stepped nearer.

"Michael," I said, "don't plague the girl."

Michael mumbled an oath. "Let go my hair, you shrew!"

But she would not loosen her grip. As she turned her face, her veil slipped aside, revealing her flushed cheeks. I felt as if I should faint from surprise and joy. It was Anna, the deputy's daughter, and her sister Marie.

"Miss Anna, Miss Anna, is it really you?" I asked in a low tone.

"It is I. But please save me from this ruffian. Or are you afraid?"

I threw myself upon Michael like an enraged tiger. "Unhand the young ladies, or I will throw you into

prison. Don't you see that they are the deputy's daughters?"

The fellow drew back in alarm. "That's impossible! May my hand wither if I ever dreamed who they were! I kiss your hands a thousand times, young ladies!"

"Go to the wagon quickly."

Michael moved away like one who had had a blow.

"What in the world brought you here and in such clothes?" I continued.

"We were walking in the fields, gathering flowers. That is why we are here and dressed in this way. We made these garments last evening. Anna fancied the peasant costumes."

"But why did you go so far?"

"Anna proposed that we go to see the voters."

"How did you know that we would come?"

"Anna knew."

Anna dried her eyes. "I knew nothing," she said, pouting, and she began nervously to bite the hem of her apron.

"I will escort you home, and order the carts to go to the baths for more provisions."

Thus it was arranged. The carts slowly followed us as I took the girls over the fields and meadows.

We walked on silently side by side. When I uttered some sentence, I received a short abrupt answer. It seemed as if our tongues were tied.

"I was much surprised, Miss Anna, when I heard you call my name. I thought you did not know me."

"We met once before, if I am not mistaken."

"Yes, yes, once at the Herr Deputy's, though I had seen you often before."

"Indeed?" said Anna, as if surprised. Then another long period of silence elapsed. Marie was humming a ballad and did not appear to notice us.

"Do you know how well this costume becomes you?" I remarked rather awkwardly.

"Ah!" was all she said, and her eyelids drooped lower.

"Yes, and if I had the courage, I would say that you are ravishingly beautiful."

"Would you really?" and she laughed immoderately; "please don't say it."

"Oh, mercy!" called Marie a moment later. "How shall we cross here?"

The brook so flowed over the meadows that we were at its widest part. It was impossible to cross with dry feet, and the plank footway was a long distance up the stream. Anna looked at me confidently, but soon became embarrassed.

"What shall we do?" she said.

"And our pretty red boots!" sighed Marie.

"You would easily catch cold, even with boots on," I said. "There is no way but for me to carry you across."

"No, no!" cried Anna blushing up to her ears. But evidently she was not greatly alarmed at the prospect, because she said playfully, "I wonder if your whiskey ran down here."

"Be quick, young ladies! Do not hesitate. There is no other way. If we should go to the bridge, night might overtake us."

Marie was soon ready. I carried her safely over. She was heavy, and I sank up to my knees in the treacherous bottom of the brook. But what did I care? With a beating heart I returned for Anna.

"I will not go," she said, raising her hands deprecatingly.

"You will not go?" I repeated. My face must have become very sombre.

"No, never." She firmly closed her lips, and her cheeks grew very pale. For a moment I stood like one transfixed. I could not speak. I felt as though I should sink to the ground. My hands fell as if palsied and my knees trembled. Anna looked at me, and then slowly glided toward me like a spectre.

"You may carry me," she whispered as she raised her dreamy eyes.

"Anna," I whispered into her ear as I lifted her, "Anna," I continued, trembling like an aspen, "did you carry away my picture?"

Her hands were not free, for I held them both, but

she placed her head against my lips to prevent my speaking.

"You know it, you know it!" she murmured, while tears were dropping from her eyes. Oh, I felt a thousand times in that moment that which experienced once is sufficient to make a whole life happy. The tears that ran down her beautiful cheeks, the ecstasy of holding her in my arms, the tantalizing rustling of her skirts hanging at my side. "I love you, Anna, and will love you forever," I whispered. "Do you return my love?"

Marie ran toward us gayly, holding in her hand a captive butterfly. "Answer me quickly, I beg of you?" I whispered in Anna's ear. Her eyes fell and she sighed.

"Try to become somebody, so that I may be allowed to love you." Those words rang in my ears like bells. I heard them everywhere. They sounded like the thumping of mill-stones. They were whispered by every blade of grass on the whole way. When we arrived at the Baths, the carts were already waiting and I bade the girls adieu.

"Try to become somebody." I, to become somebody. As if I had not tried enough! But how must a pauper like me struggle, before he can raise his eyes to a deputy marshal's daughter. And what could I become? In about four years I could aspire to a petty district notaryship. My head was all on fire, and thoughts crowded each other in the utmost confusion.

"Ha! Michael, come here."

"What do you wish, kind sir?"

"Count the number of votes in our possession."

"I have already counted them. We own 190 souls. We shall have a poor election."

"But there will also be eighty votes from the lower district, besides about forty at the county seat. Well —well, we have more—much more than we need."

"But what could I do, my dear Herr, since they all wanted to come?"

"What could you do? Why you could—teach them before election to pronounce—*my name.*"

"Ho, ho," shouted Michael enthusiastically. "Why didn't you tell us before that you were the candidate? I should not have broken the barrel."

"What? Did you break it? Perhaps you also overturned the wagon." Michael proudly blinked both eyes and assented that it was he and no one else.

"And why did you cut such capers?"

"Why?" he asked as though surprised. "Just to see the lordly liquor flow—just for greater effect."

Toward night we quietly entered the county seat. Everything passed off in perfect order. The men voted according to their instructions. By a majority of fifty I was elected representative.

Well, what more took place, you already know from the newspapers. I mean my betrothal to Anna.

Meanwhile Count Pally got well and publicly called me a scoundrel in his club. I sent him my seconds, but he refused me satisfaction.

I have now told everything exactly and truthfully, may it please the court; because there is a bullet in question. I will either aim it at Count Pally or at my own head.

The court looked at me, and finally the presiding judge said this was a serious matter and asked me to retire.

Well, kind reader, the rest is soon told. The verdict of the court was favorable. The conclusion is, that Anna is my beloved wife, and several youngsters are now playing about our doorstep.

The wild and fragmentary nature of much of the fiction of central Europe is well indicated by this weird legend from the pen of Marie Krysinska. It has been translated for ROMANCE by Kate Brousseau.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE DEAD.

MANIA and Marysia were sixteen years of age, and both possessed the grave and melancholy beauty of the Uhranian maidens; the large eyes, blue as the evening sky, and the heavy brown tresses. They seemed to be sisters as, arm-in-arm, they wandered by themselves across the sleeping moors and in the glades among the firs. They bore no relation to each other, however, save that of friendship, but oh, how dearly they loved one another!

Orphans, neither the one nor the other had known her father, needy laborers who had died young, but with both still lingered the memory of a tragic day when men in black garments had carried away the bodies of their sweet, dead mothers, to lay them away in the tomb.

Mania and Marysia had known each other since the days of their infancy, but it was only when Mania, the last to put on mourning, threw herself sobbing on Marysia's neck, on leaving the church where still burned the funeral tapers, it was then only that their affection became strong, almost fierce. It had a singular charm, this absorbing love for each other, between these two pure childish souls in the midst of this hard rural life, surrounded by a landscape harsh and sad; where witchcraft ruled, and where the Marvellous lay in ambush under each osier-tree and galloped over the plains by night with stealthy step.

Mania and Marysia lived in the same "hata," and cultivated a little strip of ground which supplied their few wants. Evenings while spinning they filled one another with superstitious fears by reciting the legends

in which their young memories were already rich; as of a certain person, who, awakening once, about midnight, on the border of a meadow where fatigue had overtaken him, perceived a woman standing near him. As he regarded her curiously, he noticed that she had feet like a beast. On entering the village, he related his vision, and people were not surprised when, shortly afterward, a pestilence raged among the cattle, for the spectre was none other than the Death of the cows. The same presentiment personified caused the cholera to appear under the form of a woman who walked on the water, sighing sadly; she had red shoes and a collar of coral. Then, too, the treasures that became weary of sleeping in the earth and offered themselves, revealing their presence by some supernatural sign—a blue flame, a cat or a child running hurriedly around the place where the gold was found buried.

Mania and Marysia, being very pious, did not fail in any church service. And when from their lonely "hata" they heard the holy bells call to prayers, the two young girls hastened to carry to the feet of the images all shining with fine gold and glowing colors the goodly offering of their little souls, as chaste as the hollyhocks. But when, after the service, the youths wished to take them to the dance, Mania and Marysia fled frightened like two wild partridges.

On a certain evening they were spinning hemp by the light of resinous branches which burned in the fireplace. The night outside was lighted only by occasional stars, and the snow fell intermittently. At intervals the gusts raised clouds of sleet that tapped against the windows, like swarms of frightened moths seeking refuge.

And behold, as midnight approached, came the sound of church-bells confused and muffled.

The orphans looked at one another, surprised. The holy feasts of the calendar they knew by heart, and surely none fell upon this particular day, much less at this hour of the night!

"Without a doubt we have but imagined that we heard the bells," they said to each other. But no. The bells rang, and their voice, beautiful and sad, floated languidly on the limpid air like a bark on the water.

"Since the Lord calls, he must be obeyed; let us go."

And the two friends in haste covered with lambskin their trembling shoulders and departed.

The church, filled with the faithful, was aglow with the light of many tapers. The orphans felt their hearts freeze within them when they saw that this multitude was standing absolutely mute and motionless. There were among them none of the parishioners whom they knew, but only strange faces, terrible in their aspect. At last, the young girls recognized a few, but they were those of people already dead. Shivering with fright, Mania and Marysia tried to pray with fervor, and not to heed the sinister assembly.

The great door opened, and before the high altar appeared the officiating priest. When he turned toward the worshippers, the young girls could see his long white beard, descending to his waist, and his hair streaming over his shoulders. They recognized then a holy pastor who had been dead a hundred years and whose portrait hung on the wall of the presbytery. It was he, just as he appeared in the painting, feature for feature. On his yellow skin, however, appeared something dull, like ancient mould.

Mania perceived near them her dead godmother; and a little farther along, her own dear mother. The latter remained indifferent, like a stranger, without even seeing her child; but the godmother bent toward the orphan, and said hastily in her ear, "Why did you come here, little one? Fly, for the love of God! Fly quickly! And if you are followed, throw all that you can behind you, or you are lost!"

Hearing this, Mania and Marysia strove to gain the portal, and began to run swiftly along the road. But the crowd of the dead galloped after them and almost overtook them. First the girls threw a slipper behind

them and then another, followed by the pretty little aprons. The Dead satiated their wrath for an instant on these objects; their creaking fingers rent them; their grinding teeth tore them spitefully. Then the pursuit recommenced. The vast arch of the dark sky, embroidered now with silvery stars, had the air of a funeral cloth above the winding-sheet of snow stretched over the sleeping plain. The haggard eyes of the two fugitives seemed to see running before them the convulsed silhouettes of the bushes, and at their heels sounded the steps of the horrible and fantastic throng.

Mania and Marysia threw away their skirts and their finely worked "koschula," and their beads and holy medals. They reached at last their "hata," half-dead from fright and cold.

Then, as one of them bolted the door, she heard an indescribable voice say these words:

"You are saved, my pretty ones, you are saved; but it will not become you to remain long among the living after having assisted at *the Sacrament of the Dead.*"

And indeed they did not remain long. They never arose again from the bed in which they sank trembling in a fever caused by the fright and cold of that awful night. Two weeks afterward they both died, and went to rejoin in the cemetery the army of the dead.

Thus they atoned for having by their presence profaned the Mystery of the Dead; the solemn and dreadful Mystery of the Dead.

The history of Poland and of Hungary is one of almost perpetual war. If, as the poet says,

"—there is but one theme for ever-enduring bards,
And that is the theme of war, the fortune of battles,
The making of perfect soldiers,"

there is plenty of material for them in the records of these unhappy provinces. Yet they have a recompense in the universal love and sympathy of mankind, who have celebrated their heroism alike in prose and verse. Here is the story, translated for ROMANCE by Jessie Lewis, of a man who, for the love of Poland, risked his life and almost lost it.

A VOLUNTEER.

"You are sober, General; you seem preoccupied, sad, quiet when with me. Can it be from lack of interest?"

Thus spake the pretty Countess Alvïs Zélinska, in a soft tone of reproach, accompanied by the most gracious of smiles, to a French officer sitting by her side.

This young officer was the brave Calviniac, an Auvergnese Highlander, who, before his thirtieth year, had won already upon the battle-field his epaulettes as a General of Cavalry.

They happened to be alone in a vast *salon* at one of the old palaces in Warsaw, the home of the Countess, who had been left a widow at twenty-two. A large fire burned in the enormous fireplace of rose marble, upon the pediment of which the arms of Zélinska were finely sculptured.

The month of January, 1807, the time of this story, was remarkable on account of its severity. It is well known that Napoleon, after the battle of Jena and the overthrow of Prussia, conceived the gigantic idea of a Continental blockade and, instead of enjoying in peace his triumphs and his glory, wished to impose by force on all Europe the effective execution of his projects against England. For that, he resolved to pursue the remnant of the Prussian troops to their last intrenchment, and to go to meet the Russian army, which was

still intact, and under the command of General Benningsen.

"You are still mute, General," continued the Countess. "Have I lost your confidence?"

"Pardon me," replied Calviniac. "You must excuse me for being dreamy and preoccupied. You know the Emperor has withdrawn from me the command of my brigade for a month, because I expressed too frankly my opinion of his indifference to the sad condition of your unhappy country. The Emperor has punished me severely,—and here I am, far from my brave soldiers. I was quite happy in my disgrace, since it gave me the pleasure of being received by you, in the midst of the most glorious representatives of Polish nobility, as an ally, as a friend. You, the energetic and enthusiastic patriot, have kept up my spirits, have permitted me the pleasure of seeing you, of confiding in you my cares and dreams, of admiring you, of lov——"

"Ah! General!"

"Yes, I am going to say of loving you. But am I worthy of expressing such a sentiment, when I ought to make a strange confession? You see me sad and preoccupied, because there is in me a violent combat. I am happy, intensely happy; yet at the same time, in spite of the charm which chains me by your side, I would like to be elsewhere. The inaction to which I am condemned crushes me. I curse the severity of my sovereign. I would like this instant to mount a horse, cross Warsaw, and rejoin the army;—which means to leave you, to flee from your beautiful eyes, in order to see, face-to-face, the horrible mustaches of the Cossacks of Benningsen."

"You are always frank, General. However, I admit this unforeseen declaration has surprised me a little. After fifteen days of repose, you become dull and disconsolate. You are homesick for camps and battles. My *salon* seems to you less attractive than your tent in the midst of the snow."

"Permit me to explain. I heard yesterday that the movement of concentration goes on rapidly; that the

Russians are going to be forced to accept battle. My blood boils at the news. 'They are going to fight,' I reflect. 'My brothers-in-arms are going into danger and honor. I wish to share their lot.' However, when I think of you, I am cowardly. I restrain my feelings. Thus you see me here near you, as usual. But I feel that my conduct merits reproach. If you esteem me, you cannot blame me for this indecision which tortures me. You cannot advise me to remain inactive, in the midst of luxury and comfort, in a rich palace, when the dragoons whom I commanded yesterday, camping now in the snow, now marching in the mud or crossing the Vistula by the bridge of boats, are going once more to brave the dangers of war for the glory of France and perhaps for the liberty of Poland!"

The Countess remained standing before the General, listening eagerly to his words, and expressing by her passionate looks the admiration which this martial ardor inspired in her.

"I love you thus!" said she. "No matter how much I may miss you, I feel, alas! that you ought to go. I thank you for having given me a day. A day is much in these troubled times. Yes, General, go—go where duty calls you; resume the command of your troops, and return victorious."

"Thanks, Countess. You understand me. After leaving you, I wish to render myself worthy of your noble friendship;—but see to what an extreme an implacable will has reduced me. I have no right to resume my arms and rank. To go to the Emperor, to implore his pardon, to seek to reinstate myself in his favor, would be a bold and useless step. The Emperor has no time for audiences, and then, ought I to deny my sentiment for Poland; to retract the words which I spoke so freely? Oh, no! To-day less than ever. Therefore, I am forced to seek a way of resuming the service without being recognized by my superiors. I have reflected for some time, and when you reproached me for my silence, I was just making a definite resolution. I will present myself to the outposts as a

Poland countryman, desirous of fighting for his country."

"Why! General, do you wish to enlist as a simple soldier? You will have to obey, instead of command, to march in the first ranks, to struggle hand-to-hand with the enemy! It is to certain death you voluntarily run. Oh! What have I done? I, who have rather encouraged you in your resolution! I who admire you only to lose you! I was wrong. I was misled by blind patriotism. Renounce your projects! It is your duty to execute scrupulously the orders of the Emperor."

"No, Countess, my duty is to be where the French are exposing their lives—to brave the dangers that they run."

"Even breaking your word?"

"I do not violate my oath since I enlist as a volunteer."

"You are immovable. Do therefore as you wish. My best wishes accompany you, and I will pray for you. God grant that your temerity may not be punished! Think of me sometimes."

She extended her hand, which he kissed passionately, while she turned aside her head to conceal the great tears which glistened like diamonds in her eyes.

February 8th, 1807, at daybreak, the French and Russian armies met. The troops of Benningsen covered the mountain-tops in front of the little town of Eylau. The Emperor relied upon this village, the cemetery of which he occupied with the guard. The vast plain which separated the two camps was gloomy and desolate. A white shroud of snow, recently fallen, entirely covered the hard ground. The sky was gray and gloomy. The rays of the sun could not penetrate the thick, frosty atmosphere.

Upon the left, a little back of Eylau, was massed the cavalry of Murat. In the first rank, among the dragoons of General Grouchy, was a simple cavalier, sword in hand, without a distinctive mark, without a decoration, but superb in his martial and determined bearing. It was Calviniac.

After the scene which we have described, the General lost no time. Having dressed himself in the clothes of a countryman, and crossed the plains of Lithuania, he presented himself for enlistment to the first Colonel of dragoons whom he met. Thanks to his disguise, he was not recognized, and he was soon able to put on the green tunic with its yellow cuffs and to take his place in the midst of his new companions, wearing, like them, the white breeches, the regulation boots, and the helmet with an ornamental plume of black.

The battle was in progress all the morning. About eleven o'clock, the snow fell in large flakes, blinding the eyes of the French, who began to waver. The Emperor believed that his good luck had forsaken him. He saw that a superhuman effort must be made. Calling Murat, he said:

"Well! are you going to allow these men to devour us? March forward with all your cavalry."

At the order Murat started like a flash, and drew up his eighty squadrons in line of battle, placing ahead the dragoons of Grouchy. Calviniac's heart beat fast; at last he was going to fight as a simple soldier; to devote himself obscurely, lost in numbers; to sacrifice his life, without hope of recompense, for the love and glory of his country. His thoughts transported him to the *salon* of the palace at Warsaw where he had said adieu to the Countess Zélinska. It seemed to him that he could still hear her voice, could see her smile. Thus encouraged, it was with joy that he threw himself against the regiment of Cossacks who, with their sabres, were cutting down the army of Augereau.

The snow ceased, and one could contemplate, in all its horror, this immense plain covered with the dead, the dying and the wounded, the blood making horrible spots on the white uniforms of the French soldiers.

The meeting of the two bodies of cavalry was terrible. Calviniac, showing an impetuosity and an assurance which astonished his comrades, struck most formidable blows, overthrowing all obstacles. The Cossacks were soon dispersed or rendered unfit for battle. Then the

Russians, in order to delay the victorious cavaliers, hurled again their bullets and shot into the *mêlée*, without caring for their own. Grouchy fell, his horse having been pierced by a ball. Calviniac dashed in, released his General, who happily was not wounded, and gave him his own horse; then, bestriding a horse without a master, he rushed again into the fight. At this moment, Murat and his eighty squadrons, horsemen, dragoons, cuirassiers, charged at full gallop into the Russian infantry. After a long resistance and several assaults, they yielded, fleeing from all sides terrified, bloody, and seeking a refuge in the neighboring woods. Calviniac, in the midst of this frightful confusion, fought with an audacity which nothing could stop. Each blow struck, overthrew and killed. His right arm was injured by a ball, but he seized his sabre in his left hand and continued his course until the sound of the clarion forbade his further action. The work of this cavalry, perhaps the most astonishing in the history of the Empire, decided the victory.

The next day the Emperor, in order to honor in some special manner the heroic squadrons of Murat, wished to survey the front of this admirable company of horsemen. Grave and sombre, after a victory so hotly disputed, he passed, at a slow gallop, before the soldiers, saluting the flag lowered before him. Arriving opposite the eighth regiment of dragoons, he slackened his pace and said to Grouchy, who followed him:

"Who is that cavalier in the first rank, who holds his sword in the left hand? He strangely resembles Calviniac."

"He is a Polish volunteer," responded Grouchy. "He was engaged several days ago, and has fought like a lion. I saw him at work, and I do not know of one more worthy a reward."

The Emperor approached the pretended Polander.

"Well, my brave fellow," said he, "I have the pleasure of congratulating you upon your courage. One of my generals, Calviniac, recently took the liberty of criticising my actions. I have deposed him. You may

replace him. I shall have then at the head of my dragoons an officer worthy of them, whom I consider a compatriot and a friend."

He resumed his course, followed by his escort of superbly-uniformed generals.

The days which followed this battle were employed in removing the dead to the shore of the Vistula near Warsaw. They were transported on sledges across the vast plains, followed by flocks of crows. Some, whom the guard would not permit to be moved, remained in the convent of Eylau, now transformed into a hospital. Among them was General Calviniac, who was very ill with a fever. He had abused his strength. After having fought all day, his arm in a sling, he was still at his post of honor; but at night, when the excitement of the struggle and the emotion of triumph were somewhat calmed, his wound, which had re-opened, caused him violent pain. Fever set in. The surgeons thought amputation would be necessary, but knowing that the ball had not remained in the flesh and that the bone was not injured, they decided to wait a few days.

Happily, a woman watched near him. A young and beautiful Polish girl, wearing the graceful costume of the peasants of Ukraine, had presented herself to the outposts, saying that she sought her brother, a volunteer in the cavalry of Murat. The countess Zélinska, for it was she, had had a presentiment of the result of the battle, and, following her feminine instincts, she sought among the wounded for her lover. After a day of vain search, worn out and anxious, almost desperate, she conceived the idea of seeking shelter in the convent of the Benedictines. Seeing that it was occupied by the wounded French, she still had strength enough to search the large halls. Asking explanations, giving details, she finally discovered the little room where, upon a camp-bed, was extended, not her brother, as she said, but he whom she loved more dearly than a brother, since she had witnessed his chivalry and patriotism.

The Countess was not recognized by Calviniac. Delirium had robbed him of his reason. This condition

lasted for several days, during which his devoted nurse watched over him constantly. Finally, the fever abated, and the surgeons declared that, if he avoided all imprudence, recovery was certain.

One morning Calviniac, while taking some nourishment, regarded with attention the young woman who served him with so much devotion. He thought that he recognized her features, but her dress puzzled him. He feared that it was a dream or an hallucination. However, hearing her speak, he trembled, and remembered the sweet interviews at the fireside in the palace of Warsaw. He made an effort to collect his confused ideas, and raising himself upon his couch, called feebly:

"Alvïs!"

The Countess, unable to repress an instinctive movement, turned toward the sick man. She approached him: their eyes met. They regarded each other a long time, without speaking, but this mute language told the story, and joy radiated from their faces.

"How came you here?" asked Calviniac. "It is you who have cared for me like an angel from Heaven! It is you who have saved me! Let me repeat to you that word which you stopped upon my lips the day of my departure. Let me tell you that I love you."

He extended his thin, pale hand, which Alvïs took in hers.

"General," responded she, "my conduct is a confes sion that my words do not try to deny. My life belongs to you. I am ready to follow you wherever chance leads you. Your name shall be my name, and your country, my country."

This thrilling instance of a reverse of power is by Georges Le Faure, and has been translated by Isabel Smithson.

THE POLE'S ANGELUS.

"You ask why it is that the sound of the Angelus-bell echoing through the silence of evening affects me so strongly. There is a story connected with the matter. Listen, and I will tell it to you."

So saying, Monsieur Bazilewith lighted a cigar and then, seeing that his audience was all attention, he continued:

"I must go back to the days of my youth. I had just left the military school, and was very proud of the sword I carried, and anxious for an opportunity of giving it its baptism of blood. I had not long to wait, for trouble broke out in Varsovia, and my regiment, with many others, received orders to set out for Poland, where a campaign seemed imminent. The Poles, both nobles and peasants, had grown tired of the restraints imposed upon them, and had determined to make a desperate effort to free themselves from the yoke which was weighing them down, and then began that heroic and bloody contest—Russia's eternal shame.

"We had the advantage of numbers, but our adversaries, who were fortified by their strong faith and ardent patriotism, knew the country thoroughly and they waged war on us without truce or mercy. Their commander-in-chief divided his troops into flying columns which overran the country, just as the Republican troops did in France at the time of the first revolution.

"I arrived, one evening, in command of a detachment, at a village called Kurwo, where I expected to surprise a band of Polish patriots. They had been warned of our approach, however, and had taken flight, and I discovered that they had agreed with the villagers to return during the night and massacre us in our sleep.

"Fortunately for us a miserable fellow told us, in ex-

change for a few roubles, that it had been arranged that the ringing of the Angelus-bell should be the signal for the rebels to return to the village for the purpose of slaughtering us.

"I waited several hours and then went to the church myself, intending to give the signal which would call the Poles from their hiding place, but I could not find the bell-rope. After a long search, I became convinced that the rope had been purposely cut off.

"I was furious, and ordering all the people to gather on the village-green, I announced to them that, if within five minutes' time some one of them were not ready to climb the bell-tower and ring the Angelus, the village should be set on fire and every one of them put to the sword.

"The minutes passed slowly, and the people stood silent, with calm, resigned faces awaiting death; suddenly a boy of fifteen approached me, and said that he was ready to do my bidding.

"'Here,' said I, 'take this rouble and use it to drink the czar's health. Now go up, and ring loud and long.'

"Without making any reply, the boy sprang like a cat up to the belfry, perched aloft and seized the bell-clapper in both hands.

"But Misericordia! It was not the musical Angelus I heard; it was the tolling of the solemn funeral-bell! The patriots would be on their guard, and, warned by the bell, would not come out and fall into the trap I had prepared for them!

"Breathless and blind with rage, I snatched a gun from one of my men, pointed it at the child in the belfry and took aim. But suddenly, it seemed as if a mist passed from before my eyes; quick as a flash of lightning, I realized the sublimity of the fifteen-year-old hero's action, and without firing I lowered my arm.

"Twenty years passed away, and then began that terrible struggle between Russia and Turkey which was as disastrous for the one as for the other of the two powers, and which terminated with the memorable taking of Plevna.

"My chivalrous adventure in Poland had interfered with my advancement so materially that I was only a captain, and I eagerly seized every opportunity of distinguishing myself, in hopes of making up for lost time and winning the longed-for epaulettes.

"One day, while reconnoitring, I ventured too far from the outposts, and fell into an ambuscade of Turks. In the twinkling of an eye, I was seized, bound, gagged and carried on a man's back into the enemy's camp, and when the bandage was removed from my eyes, I found myself surrounded by about a dozen men attired in a strange-looking uniform, which seemed to be half Turkish and half Russian.

"One glance sufficed to assure me that there had been an engagement on this spot the night before; on the long grass were stretched the corpses of the czar's soldiers, and crouched beside them were Mussulmans tearing off the clothing and quarrelling and swearing as they divided among themselves the garments of the dead.

"My attention was soon diverted from this horrible sight, however, for the men around me began to despoil me also of my clothes, and I could hear them dividing, in advance, the different articles of my apparel; they had already unfastened my coat, when I suddenly caught the sound of a few words spoken in the Russian language.

"'I am not surprised,' I cried, 'at being robbed by these Mohammedan curs, but that a Russian should stoop to such conduct——'

"'You mistake,' said the same voice, 'I am not Russian, I am a Pole.'

"The speaker turned toward me, and I looked at him in surprise, as he continued angrily:

"'Yes, I am a Pole, and when my countrymen bowed their necks to the yoke and resigned themselves, with hatred in their hearts, to the Russian rule, I fled from my home. What I longed for most, was to find the means of meeting you Russians face to face, and to avenge the death of my countrymen and the humiliation of my country.'

"While he spoke, I could not take my eyes from his face, and it seemed, through the mist of memory, that I had seen that face before.

"'You are from the village of Kurwo!' I said, suddenly.

"'How do you know that?' he stammered, changing color.

"'Do you not remember the Angelus-bell?'

"He looked at me fixedly, then seized my hand, muttering:

"'You were the commanding officer?'

"'I was.'

"'You could have killed me, and I owe my life to your generosity. It must not be said that a Pole was guilty of ingratitude toward an enemy, even though it were to a Russian——'

"He said a few words to the Turks, who instantly moved away, and then, signing me to follow him, he silently led me to one of our own outposts.

"'You are free,' he said, 'and we are quits. I pray heaven that we may meet in the battle to-morrow, face to face.'

"And he turned on his heel and disappeared in the thicket."

According to this dainty bucolic by Henri Gréville (translated for ROMANCE by Julien Colmar), young men are not always engaged to the girls whom they may have fancied that for years they have been bound to. And, as will be seen, this may prove to be not so very disagreeable.

MORNING.

AN IDYL.

THE air was still; so still that nothing yet stirred. The tufts of grass among the tiles stood straight and unmoved against the milk-gray sky, and the roadway furrowed by the last evening's travel, which had left the tracks of wheels and sabots in the heavy white dust, seemed asleep under the gray transparent covering of morning. A distant sound came up from the meadows, and died away as it reached the nearest houses of the village; with a lengthened sweetness scarcely audible, it vibrated for an instant in the limpid air, then silence reigned again, that grand hush of nature which precedes her awakening, more profound just before the dawn than in the deepest blackness of night.

A similar but louder sound answered to the first from the distance. The cows, which had passed that mild June night in the open pastures, called to the milkmaids to come and relieve their swollen udders of their milk. Two or three more called, and all was still again. A scarcely perceptible tremor stirred the slender blades of grass among the stubble, and a dim, roseate light began to illumine the gray mist of the east.

Martial opened his window; no sound of awakening life was yet to be heard in the village. Among the noisette-roses, which decorated the gray wall and caressed his face, he leaned out to listen. A distant sound, which he only could hear for a moment, struck the ear; it was the clatter of the opening of a wooden door. He knelt dreamily in the narrow window and fixed his eyes upon the east. The sound of a footfall was heard

on the road, a feminine form passed toward a neighboring field. At that moment, the swallow which had built under Martial's roof came out from her nest and with her forked wing grazed the young man's cheek. He smiled at the happy omen.

During the two years since Martial's last visit to the country, he had once more made the circuit of the globe. Sailors are faithful, we know not why. Amid the distractions of the sea, the temptations of an easy life on shore, rough enough on shipboard, he had cherished the memory of a little girl, casually met, and wooed a little—a very little—before his last good-by. Why had the blue eyes of Celine haunted the sailor even in the South Seas? Why had he carried faithfully the remembrance of that innocent face before so many others?

Martial had terminated his sea-service and wished to marry Celine. That was very natural.

Arriving as he did at night, he had not yet been able to see her. Had he wished it? He was not quite sure. To see again, in the presence of friends and family, a face of which one has been dreaming for two years, is no indifferent trial; one may act ridiculously and produce an unfavorable impression, and, above everything, Martial dreaded ridicule.

But Celine went out to milk in the morning at the first peep of day. It was she who had just passed, for she was always first awake in the village and boasted of it with artless pride. The customs of our country life permit the young gallant to go "a-wooing" at these early hours; so Martial descended from his little chamber, casting a glance of joy and tenderness toward the always-open chamber where his parents, no longer young, reposed peacefully side by side, under the drapery of the old bed, ornamented by its flowered quilt of blue satine. Then he opened the door, fastened only by a latch, and stole out from the paternal roof.

The sky was now lighted up with more vivid hues; the shading of the clouds, hitherto the color of Bengal roses, was now that of *roses du roi;* the mists of the zenith

already bore the tints of flames; the west alone hardly yet reflected the coloring of the east.

Martial took the road toward the pasture where Celine's cattle were grazing. It was on the rise of a hill; the rays of the rising sun warmed the three lazy cows in the high grass. Two were lying with udder turned to the sunshine, and seemed torpid with good feeding; the third was standing quietly to be milked by the peasant girl's dexterous hand. Seated upon a little stool, she pressed the foaming milk into a copper-bound pail, but, while watching her own nimble fingers, she often turned her head toward the south, and seemed to be expecting some one with impatience. Martial stopped to look at her, but she saw him not; it was the opposite path which attracted her impatient eye. The young man's heart beat exultantly! Did she know that he had arrived? Was she already awaiting him? Did she remember that he had promised to return for her? He believed all this, and, hastening his steps, he was about to leap the pasture-bars, when on the other side of the field he saw a man approaching. He was a friend of Martial's boyhood; he knew him well. He had not left the village; what business had he with Celine? It was not the first time that François had presumed to visit the pretty milkmaid, for she smiled as he drew near, and her hitherto anxious glance fell and rested upon the milk which streamed between her fingers. The young man came very close to her and spoke a few words; then, with a leafy switch which he held in his hand, he began to gently brush her bending neck and cheek She laughingly defended herself, and went on with her milking, but little by little her fingers relaxed; her pail was full; the good beast went away satisfied; and Celine sat still with bowed head, listening to François' talk. He let fall his switch, talking still in low tones; he took Celine's hand, and both remained silently standing in the warm sunshine, up to their knees in the damp green grass. The second cow approached, pressing her fresh rosy udder against Celine's knee. The young girl smiled, made an affirmative sign and

began milking again. Martial with a heavy heart retraced his path. "Too late!" thought he bitterly. "Why should I seek further one who is already in love with another? François has remained at home, and could push his suit at all times. He has had leisure during these two years, in the evenings in winter and at milking-time in summer, to make love to the pretty girl. The absent have no show. The life of the sailor is deplorable. We have no time or chance on our voyage to gain any one's love, while at home the girls meet those who make them forget us. The fog was an omen. I should have come no further."

He sat down on the top of the cliff, sad and almost revengeful, for his heart was full of bitterness. The sun gilded the sea and the land about him. The seagulls and the swallows circled gayly, but of what avail were the joys of nature to one whose own spirit was in mourning?

The sound of a footfall upon the path caused him to raise his head; a woman came toward him—from another pasture probably—her copper-bound pail gracefully balanced upon her left shoulder, and retained in equilibrium by a leathern strap clasped in her right hand. He gazed as if at a beautiful work of nature. She was a brunette; her heavy tresses escaped from the little bonnet which vainly essayed to cover them; her hazel eyes shone with an inward fire under their long drooping lashes; her rosy cheeks took on a brighter glow under the young man's gaze.

"Good-morning!" said she, stopping beside him.

He looked at her in bewilderment. This young girl was even prettier than Celine. She appeared to know him, but he could not recall her features.

"Well, you have come back!"

"You know me, then?" asked Martial with an emotion for which he could not account.

The girl smiled, without raising her eyes. "You carried me in your arms when I was very little," said she in her rich low voice.

"Who are you, then?" said Martial.

"Guess!" answered the beauty.

"What is your name?"

"Aurora!"

Yes! he knew her well, but how beautiful she had grown, and how changed during the two years of his absence!

"How old are you?" asked he, forgetting at once his bitterness and anger.

"Sixteen."

"And you recognized me?"

The young girl smiled and nodded her head; then timidly raising her eyes, she looked at Martial for the flash of a moment. He started! What would he not have given to see again those marvellous eyes, so full of flame—and perhaps of tears—but she looked only on the ground.

"And you recognized me!" he repeated with tremendous tenderness.

"I waited for you," she said simply. "You told me one day before your last voyage that, if I was very good, I should be your little wife. I have been very good."

That was true; he had smilingly said so one day to this little girl, then but fourteen, puny and thin; a mere child in fact. He had not at that time set his eyes upon Celine, and afterward he had not thought of his promise.

"And you have waited for me, Aurora!" exclaimed Martial, suddenly overwhelmed by a new and unknown joy.

Without another word, his heart fired thus suddenly by a ray of the sunshine which was to gild his whole life, he followed the beautiful girl who called herself Aurora.

The almost invincible power of habit is one of the few cardinal established truths. The great Cassoulet, in the following story by Fernand Beissier, reached a point where an excellent habit became an incubus. This translation was made by R. D. Townsend, for the *Christian Union*.

THE SUBSTITUTE SINGER.

THAT was a good story they told me as I was sitting near the station at Galignan, waiting for the train.

Do you know Galignan? It is a little village you could almost hold in your hand, drawn close together under the few trees that surround it, as if the better to shelter itself from that great rascal of a sun which blazes almost to blinding. The road stretches before you, bordered on both sides by rows of poor, dusty, sunburned plane trees, passing the church, an old, low building of black stone, whose three spires rise in a triangle above the top of the front wall, all three cased in stone, and surmounted by a great iron weathercock, which turns with a grating noise. Beyond, vines and olive-trees cover the plain and extend up the hill-sides.

The station is at the very entrance of the village—a little station, not at all noisy, before which the trains pass quietly, not hurrying; stopping, if need be, to pick up a forgotten bundle or a belated passenger. The engineer gets down; a bottle of the wine of the country is opened—a nice little white wine, which reflects the sun like gold, and which leaves a taste like sugar or muscadel on one's tongue; glasses are filled to the brim, struck together in good-fellowship, and drained; hands are shaken; then the train quietly resumes its tranquil course, and long after one can follow with the eye over the plain its plume of smoke.

Beside the station stands a little arbor, upon which hang bunches of grapes swollen to bursting; a few wooden tables, and some chairs whose yellow cane seats are worn through in places, form all its furniture. This is called Le Grand Café de l'Univers, for I must tell

you that at Galignan everything is "grand"; there is a Grand Street, a Grand Square, and a Grand Fountain —the last a little stone construction, in which you have to open a faucet to let the water play. It was in this arbor, in point of fact, that we were waiting, while above our heads the bees hummed around the white grapes, and the crickets chirped under the plane trees.

Galignan is famous not alone for its Muscat grapes and its exquisite white wine. It also possesses Barthélemy-Trophime Cassoulet, an employee of the station, and celebrated for more than ten leagues round about for the superb way with which he cries at the departure of every train, "Passengers for Gaillargues, Ferigoulet, Baracan, and Tarascon, *take your seats!*" He who has not heard this cried has heard nothing. The words ring out like musket-shots; and the last of them cause the air to vibrate as do claps of thunder. The windows of the station rattle; the crickets, stricken with fear, stop their chirping; the dogs run to their holes; the cry is heard even to the most distant part of the village, and the old men warming themselves in the sun draw out their heavy silver watches from their fob-pockets, look at them, and murmur approvingly, "Half-past four; the Tarascon train; we have the right time!"

Above all, Cassoulet has a way of uttering the last word, Tarascon, which is indeed unique—Tar-r-r-r-rascon!—rolling it out with a really formidable noise. And there are people thereabouts who will assure you quite soberly that he could join the Grand Opera company in Paris whenever he wished; that he has often had the position offered him. For you may well suppose that, endowed with such an "organ," Barthélemy-Trophime Cassoulet sings. There again, also, he excels; there is none like him to sigh forth the languishing poem of sentiment which has to do with blue flowers and little brooks, or to thunder out some song of heroism in which the notes ring like a trumpet-call. Once a month he goes to Nimes to pass an evening with his cousin, a trombone-player at the *café-concert* in the Esplanade,

and he it is who brings all the fashionable songs of the day to Galignan. For a week after he returns there is a constant concert going on every night at the Grand Café de l'Univers; his whole repertory is gone over, old as well as new; he never wearies, but sings on and on. And all who listen clap their hands and cry, "Oh, this Cassoulet of ours!—there is certainly no one like him!"

But the most ardent admirer of Cassoulet, the one who followed him like a shadow and who applauded him the loudest—even before he began to sing—was Jean-Baptiste Mallamprat, the carpenter of Grand Street, who, incidentally, sang in the Galignan church. Never did Mallamprat dare to compare himself with Cassoulet; he recognized him as his master; never even had the idea entered his mind of seeking to equal him whom he considered inimitable. Still, he had his own fame and his special admirers; but he himself silenced them, and led them in the applause when Cassoulet intoned one of his superb and noisy refrains which they chorused with their voices and with the beating of their glasses on the table. Therefore, Cassoulet would go to the ends of the earth for Mallamprat, and Mallamprat would cast himself into the fire for his comrade Cassoulet.

Now, one Saturday about four o'clock in the afternoon Cassoulet was smoking his pipe before the door of the station, tranquilly waiting for the train from Ferigoulet, when he saw before him on the highway, walking very quickly and mopping his brow with his large handkerchief with its red squares, Jean-Baptiste Mallamprat. He was marching along, gesticulating with both his long, thin arms; and as soon as he saw his friend, he hastened still more, motioning to him and crying out.

Cassoulet, as he was heavy, fat, and slow of gait, waited for his friend to come up. Then he asked, "Well, what is the matter?"

"Oh!" And Mallamprat gesticulated wildly, all out of breath, letting his heavy body fall on the bench on which his friend was seated.

Cassoulet opened his eyes to their full extent, and they shone with curiosity. "Well?" he asked again.

"Ah! ah! Oh! oh!" replied the other, making signs that he was getting his breath. And he began to pant again, while Cassoulet calmly waited. At last his friend poured out all in a breath the story of what had happened—a frightful thing, a misfortune to make one lose one's head! The following day, Sunday, he was obliged to go to Baracan. A baptism from which he could not absent himself; his sister's child, and he was to be godfather. A superb child, already almost as large as its father and mother, and which resembled himself—oh, wonderfully! The ceremony would be magnificent. Eating would be going on all day long! All the relatives were invited. And of course it was impossible for him to refuse to go, and so put everybody out—the parson, the father and mother, the godmother, and everybody else.

What was more, the preparations for the feast were already made, the fowls picked out, plucked, and made ready for the spit, the cake already in the oven. If he had been warned even two days before, it might have been possible to put off the ceremony. But it was just like them; they did everything in that fashion. They had arranged the whole affair without consulting him, and it was only now, hardly an hour ago, that he received by post a bit of a letter which let him know what was going on.

Cassoulet looked at him confusedly, listening without understanding. The other went on, sprinkling his talk with vigorous exclamations, gesticulating more and more, sometimes striking his friend on the shoulder, sometimes seizing him by the hands, and ending by telling him that under these circumstances he alone could save him; that without his aid the baptism would be a failure, the banquet lost, the mother in tears.

"I count on you," he repeated, as the other did not reply. "Thanks. And now our friendship is one of life and death!" And, seizing him in his two long arms, he kissed him noisily on both cheeks.

Once escaped from that sudden clasp, Cassoulet first got his breath; then quietly, without hurrying himself, remarked:

"But you have not told me what you wish me to do!"

Mallamprat looked at him in astonishment, then burst into loud laughter.

"It is so, to be sure," he said. "In a word, this is what you must do. To-morrow is Sunday; therefore, of course, there is high mass. If I am not there, who is to sing it? One person alone can replace me—you! For as to asking the *curé* to change from high mass to low mass, one might as well ask the river Durance to swallow up the Rhone, or the *mistral* to play on the flute. So you must take my place at the singing-desk, or I am a lost man. No train passes during either mass or vespers. And even if there did, it could wait a little well enough. It's agreed, is it not? To-morrow you will sing in my place, and when I get back, we will drink together one of those good bottles of white wine that you know about, those I keep for my friends on special occasions at the far end of the cellar."

The thought of the white wine brought a smile to Cassoulet's face. Yes, certainly, he knew it well, and liked it even more. He winked, clicked with his tongue, and said, "I accept!" At the same time he was really glad to do a service to his old comrade. Moreover, he was not sorry to have a chance to be listened to a little, for there had been no social meetings at the Grand Café de l'Univers for some time. In summer the evenings were very heavy and hot. He began to cough and hum to himself, as if to prove to his own satisfaction that he still possessed that sonorous organ which had made him so famous.

"I can count on you, then?" asked Mallamprat for the last time.

"Shake hands on it," replied his friend, extending his own as he spoke. "You may go and baptize your nephew—and all the rest of them, if you like—with tranquil mind. Don't disturb yourself. Everything will be right."

"You quite understand what you have to do?"

"Perfectly. I have heard you often enough to know how you go at it! When your turn comes to sing, they give you a sign, and you go right ahead."

"Exactly so. But, if you wish, we might have a little rehearsal this evening."

"By no means. I have sung plenty of other things, and more difficult things too," said Cassoulet, bridling up.

And the other bowed before him.

Just then the bell in the station rang.

"The Tarascon train," exclaimed Cassoulet, rising. "I return to my post. Good-by, Jean-Baptiste. Have a good time."

"Good-by, Trophime, and thank you!"

And Mallamprat set out again on a run in the direction of his house, in haste to tell everybody that the affair was satisfactorily settled, while Cassoulet rushed to the platform to meet the train, which rolled in at its customary moderate pace, and to utter his resounding "Travellers for Gaillargues, Ferigoulet, Baracan, and Tarascon, *take your seats!*"

The next day—ah! the next day—all Galignan was present at the mass, men as well as women, big and little, old and young. Just think of it! Nothing had been talked of the night before through all the village but the departure of Mallamprat and Cassoulet's taking his place; every one was anxious to see how the latter would acquit himself. Accordingly at an early hour the little church was crowded in every corner. Even the church-warden's pew was invaded, and the good *curé*, who had never been present at such another joyful occasion, was visibly agitated.

As for Cassoulet, he stood there in his Sunday coat, with his good, full face quite placid, as calm behind the singer's desk as on the platform of the station, looking at everybody, making signs of salutation with his head or hands, a little contented smile on his lips. That morning, on rising, he had tried a few notes. Never had he been in better or fuller voice.

As he accompanied his friend to the station, he had quietly shrugged his shoulders when the latter gave him a last word of advice.

"Go! go!" he had replied, pushing him into the car which was to take him to Baracan. "Baptize everybody at your ease. We have no need of you here." And the train departed.

Well, the mass was superb. Oh, friends, what a success was his! And such a voice! The windows trembled at it; and the little stone saints, motionless in their niches, seemed almost about to awake from their eternal slumber. Cassoulet's voice rang like a trumpet, sometimes rolling like distant thunder, overpowering the organ that accompanied him, drowning it out entirely.

Sometimes out of the corner of his eye Cassoulet glanced at the poor instrument and the organist who was scrambling away at it, trying to make himself heard. Pshaw! Why, it hardly made more noise than a wooden clapper!

What is more, the longer he sang, the stronger his voice grew. The organ stopped, overwhelmed, out of breath, as it were, and still he sang on. It was really a magnificent occasion, and all Galignan talks of it to this day.

When church was out, Cassoulet received a positive ovation. But he modestly refused to linger to accept it; there was only time for him to run to the station and resume his post; a train was whistling; and five minutes later the wondering village heard him uttering his wonted cry, more sonorous and beautiful than ever.

The hour of vesper service arrived. This was what the people were particularly expectant about. Here Cassoulet could really let his voice out to its best. Every one was anticipating it with joy.

Vespers began; everything went on perfectly; Cassoulet's triumph continued.

The time for the sermon came. The *curé* made a sign; the singing stopped, and he mounted into the pulpit. He had something to talk about that day, I can assure you. He congratulated every one; gently,

slowly, with real enjoyment, he turned out the most beautiful sentences, searching for his prettiest words and his newest metaphors. You ought to have heard what he said about Cassoulet; he compared his voice to the trumpets of Jericho which could overthrow walls.

Cassoulet, all this time, having nothing else to do, had quietly fallen asleep. It must be admitted that the day was one of the hottest of the summer, such as you can experience only at Galignan.

Cassoulet had thrown himself back in his big arm-chair—a very comfortable arm-chair it was, I can assure you, with broad back comfortably sloped, and arms just the right height to hold one up. A mild light prevailed. So—warmth, fatigue, and the shade all aiding—little by little he had fallen asleep, lost in golden dreams, while from the pulpit above his eulogy was being uttered in glowing terms.

The organist listened, watching the pulpit, his hands on the keyboard, ready to play. He had not seen Cassoulet fall asleep.

Suddenly the *curé* made a sign. Quick! No time to lose. The organist presses the pedals with his feet, and nudges his neighbor with his elbow, saying, "Attention! that is for us."

Cassoulet, awakened with a start, jumps up as if a spring had been touched, and, forgetting everything, thinking himself still at his post at the station, begins to shout, in a voice like thunder, "Passengers for Gaillargues, Ferigoulet, Baracan, and Tarascon, *take your seats!*"

The rest of the story I missed, because the train was coming into the station, and Cassoulet's voice was calling us. So, if you are some time passing through Galignan, get them to tell it you. I have written the tale as it was told to me; but you miss in it the sun which was shining upon us, the white wine that was gilding our glasses, and the crickets which were chirping and almost, it seemed, laughing among the white leaves of the plane trees.

ROMANCE.

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It is a good plan when one is travelling to be cautious about making acquaintances. It is also a good plan not to be too quick in condemning a fellow-passenger for an apparent fault. This moral is most cleverly drawn in the following story, written for ROMANCE by Curtis Yorke.

AN ADEQUATE REASON.

HE was a rather tall young man and sufficiently athletic. His face was well finished and had a certain air of self-possession which some people call self-conceit, and resent accordingly. He appeared to have seen some thirty and odd years—and those who knew him best said his temper was not of the most Christian; but of the latter assertion I am not competent to judge. His name was George Carew, and at the time of which I write he was a passenger on board the Royal Mail steamer *Cobra* on her homeward voyage from Buenos Ayres to Southampton. It was late in the year, and the passengers were comparatively few. I cannot with truth say that Carew was a general favorite on board. He was taciturn as a rule, and when he was not taciturn, he was apt to be dogmatic.

Among the male passengers he was usually spoken of as "a decent fellow enough, but queer." The feminine portion of the community thought—or said they thought—him uninteresting. As he never displayed any desire to flirt with any of them this, perhaps, was natural. Among their number was a tall, pretty blonde, who had gradually pierced the armor of his reserve, and in whose company he had even been seen to smile. They became very good friends—so much so, indeed, as to draw down upon the young lady's head various maternal lectures on the folly of encouraging young men who were nobodies. But as Carew, of course, did not hear these lectures, and as Miss Ida Lennox was a self-willed young person, their friendship suffered no interruption.

There was a certain Mrs. Bouverie on board, an extremely handsome widow, in whom Carew, for some

unknown reason, had aroused a violent dislike. She was clever as well as handsome, but was possessed of a passionate and somewhat uncertain temper,—which last, however, in virtue of her many counterbalancing good qualities, was universally condoned.

One evening at dinner Mrs. Bouverie was expatiating to those nearest to her on the value and antiquity of a very curious and beautiful ring which she wore, and which she had picked up in a tour through Italy. She affirmed it to be at least three hundred years old. It was a broad gold band, chased richly and with marvellous delicacy, and set all round at regular intervals with large diamonds of exquisite brilliancy. Inside were two capital letters, N. C., each letter formed of tiny seed-pearls sunk into the gold. Mrs. Bouverie, who was of a romantic turn, was of opinion that it had been an ancient betrothal-ring. There was a half-effaced date inside, which the widow's right-hand neighbor, a pale, consumptive-looking clergyman, was in vain trying to decipher through a small magnifying-glass. Presently a lady opposite begged to be allowed to examine the ring, and from her it was passed from hand to hand pretty well up and down the length of the table.

But, strange to say, it did not come back to its owner. It had apparently disappeared. Every one declared it had passed safely out of his or her hands. Where was it then? There was a great commotion, of course; everybody rose, and a thorough search was made, on and under the table and from one end to the other of the long saloon.

The ring, however, was not forthcoming. Its owner had by this time become somewhat excited, and a rather disagreeable scene ensued. In point of fact, Mrs. Bouverie insinuated that some one had appropriated her ring. Upon this, some of the male passengers angrily suggested that, if Mrs. Bouverie entertained suspicions of that nature, all present had better turn out their pockets. To this proposition there was a general assent.

All resumed their seats, and there was a hurried dis-

entombing of keys, letters, pocket-handkerchiefs, etc., —but no ring.

Carew, to the surprise of all, quietly refused to exhibit the contents of his pockets.

"But merely as a matter of form, Mr. Carew," expostulated the Captain.

The young man, however, repeated his refusal—courteously, but more inflexibly, if anything, than before.

There was an awkward silence. Carew remained leaning back in his chair, looking pale and annoyed. Some of the passengers smiled meaningly, others raised their eyebrows.

Then Mrs. Bouverie forgot herself.

"May I ask, sir," she said, addressing Carew in an excited tone, "why you refuse to do as all your fellow-passengers have done?"

"You may, madame," was the brief and haughty answer.

"Well, sir—and why not?"

"Because I have a very special reason for not doing so," he answered in a carefully repressed voice.

"And that reason?"

"I fear I must decline to give it," he answered quietly, but with an ominous flash in his gray eyes.

"Then you are aware of the imputation your refusal casts upon your character?" inquired the lady scornfully.

"That is a matter of the utmost indifference to me," was the icy answer.

But the speaker's hand, as it lay upon the table, opened and shut in a quick, nervous fashion which showed that he was less unmoved than he looked.

Whereupon Mrs. Bouverie waxed more and more indiscreet, and all but accused Carew of having the ring in his possession.

"Mrs. Bouverie—Mrs. Bouverie," remonstrated the Captain, "this is really not quite fair."

Here Carew, who had been growing whiter every moment, rose from his seat.

"I regret that you should have such an opinion of me as your words imply, Mrs. Bouverie," he said in a

queer, uncertain voice. "May I suggest that you drop the subject for the present? My temper is not all that it might be, and I should be sorry to be guilty of discourtesy to a lady."

Then he left the saloon and went on deck.

After this day, however, Carew observed a gradual but marked difference in his fellow-passengers' demeanor toward him. His greetings were received coldly, though with scrupulous politeness; groups began to melt insensibly away at his approach, or his advent was a signal for a dead silence.

The young women were frigid to him; the old ones were more so. The elderly men passed him with a cool nod; the younger men systematically cut him dead, and were heard on more than one occasion to enunciate the opinion that they "had always thought there was something deucedly queer about Carew."

It was apparently a matter of congratulation to them that their impression was now confirmed.

If this general boycotting affected the object of it, he did not show it, but simply withdrew into himself, and avoided other people as deliberately as they avoided him. To only one person did he make any advances—and he only made them once. It was in this way:

Early one morning he was standing looking moodily to leeward, when he suddenly became aware that Miss Lennox had come on deck and was leaning against one of the doors of the covered stairway. Their eyes met. She blushed deeply, made a half-hesitating movement of her head—which might have meant a morning salutation, or might not—and turned away. But Carew took steps toward her.

"One moment, Miss Lennox," he said in an odd voice. "Will you tell me why you have avoided me so persistently during the last few days?"

"Avoided you?" she stammered awkwardly enough. "Oh—I really—not at all. But—but——"

Carew smiled slowly. But his lips were pale. "I beg your pardon," he said quietly. Then he lifted his cap and walked away.

As he did so, he saw one of the male passengers grinning from behind an abnormally large cigar. He did not pitch the youth overboard, but he could have done so with pleasure.

After this little episode, Carew was, if possible, more ostracized than ever. Only the Captain treated him with comparative cordiality. But as the days went on, he too became less kind, especially after one forenoon when he opened to Carew the matter in hand. The young man cut him short at once.

"I don't care to discuss the thing. You can believe what your passengers seem to believe,—or you can let it alone. It is nothing to me."

Captain North shrugged his shoulders and walked off. Carew laughed; his laugh was short, though, and bitter.

If this suspected young man had been anybody in particular, it is possible they might not have been so hard upon him. But as he was simply George Carew, with nothing beyond an average good-looking face and well set-up figure to recommend him—and as, moreover, his clothes had a look of having seen better days and were by no means of the latest cut, he was clearly not an acquaintance to be regretted.

At dinner that night a slight surprise awaited him. Hitherto his left-hand neighbor at table had been an elderly maiden of many summers, to whose old-world bridlings and coquetries the silent young man beside her had responded but faintly. Of late, however, she had ignored him completely, which, to be sure, affected him but little.

To-night he found that she had changed her seat for one at the extreme end of the table—possibly fearing contamination in the moral atmosphere of the socially banned. This change required that every one on that side should move up one place, and Carew then found himself next a small, gray-clad young woman, with a pale, serious face and a smooth, bird-like head of dark-brown hair. She had also, as he absently noted, exquisitely shaped hands. He had never entered into

conversation with the little woman; indeed, he had hardly been aware of her existence beyond hearing the captain address her once or twice as Miss Neville.

As he took his seat beside her to-night, however, she said in a low, clear voice, "Good evening, Mr. Carew."

It was so many days since any of the lady passengers had addressed him at all that he actually started.

"I beg your pardon?" he said.

"I only said good evening," the girl in gray made answer, looking up to him with a little smile.

Then he noticed that her teeth were very pretty, and her eyes very satisfactory indeed. Before he had time to speak, she went on. "The captain says that before many days we shall be in the Bay of Biscay. I have not crossed it since I was a little child. I suppose it will be frightfully rough?"

"I think it is more than likely," he answered, gazing speedily at his plate.

Whereupon they drifted into a subdued, friendly conversation which lasted till the end of the meal. Carew was not a particularly soft-hearted fellow, but it touched him strangely,—this unlooked for partisanship. It gave him a queer, unwonted lump in his throat, and made him feel womanish,—which annoyed him.

Next morning he saw the girl in gray on deck. She was standing quite still, watching the screaming sea-birds that flew and dipped astern. Her pale, serious little face already seemed to him like the face of a friend. As he passed her with a slight bow, she turned, held out her hand, and bade him a cheery good morning, supplementing it by some trifling remark regarding the weather. He stopped, answered her, and stood beside her for a minute or two. Then he flung away his cigar and leaned his arm on the railing.

His companion scanned his face swiftly and covertly. She thought he looked dispirited, and she felt for him, for she was a tender-hearted little woman.

They talked on indifferent subjects until luncheon, and repeated the process between that meal and dinner, and also in the evening. And so it came to pass that

Carew began to look upon this small, gray-clad creature as his one friend in all his present world. He learned a great deal about her from her half-unconscious confidences,—among other things that her Christian name was Joyce, and that she was an orphan, and that she had known trouble. But she learned little or nothing about him.

The *Cobra* touched at Corunna, where one or two Englishmen came on board. Then came the redoubtable Bay of Biscay.

On the night they left Corunna there was a glorious moon, under the rays of which Miss Neville and Carew were walking up and down on deck.

The steamer was rolling a great deal, and he had offered her his arm, which she had accepted. She treated him in a frank, unembarrassed fashion, almost as a sister might have done, and he? Well, men are susceptible, you know, and I am bound to say his feelings to her were not altogether those of a brother.

When they had taken a few turns in silence, she said suddenly, "Mr. Carew, we seem to have become such good friends by this time, that I should like to say something to you which otherwise I should not presume to say."

She looked up at him as she spoke, and he looked down at her.

"You know you may say anything you please to me," he said, with a curious lingering tenderness in his voice.

"You won't think it a liberty, will you?" she went on.

"I shall assuredly not think it a liberty," was the brief answer. (Certainly her eyes were very lovely. They thrilled him through and through.)

"I want to ask you, then," she said somewhat nervously, "why you allow those people to believe what they believe about you?"

She felt him wince slightly.

There was a silence. The monotonous throbbing of the engines amidships mingled with floating scraps of half-heard talk and laughter.

Then Carew said in a hard, bitter voice: "Unfortu-

nately I am not responsible for their beliefs, Miss Neville. Besides, what they believe of me may be—true. I am—pardon me—an utter stranger to you; you have no reason to believe in my innocence."

"I do believe in your innocence, though," she murmured, an excited thrill running through her voice.

"May I ask why?" He spoke clearly, but she felt his arm tremble under her hand.

For one swift moment she looked up at him, and her eyes were full of tears. But he did not see them, for he was gazing straight before him.

"Why?" she repeated, with a curious sobbing little laugh. "Because I—know!"

A minute later she was gone, and he was watching the last flutter of her gown disappearing in the direction of the stairway.

Late that night Carew sat in his cabin, leaning his elbows on his knees, and staring earnestly at something he held between his fingers, something that twinkled and sparkled as the light of the electric lamp fell upon it. It was a broad gold gypsy ring, richly chased, and set at intervals with large diamonds. Inside were two Roman letters formed of tiny seed-pearls.

. . . . . .

For two days after that it blew a pretty fair gale. It rained a good deal, too, at intervals; and such of the passengers as were not violently seasick in their berths kept to the saloon or the music-room, with the exception of two or three hardy males, of whom Carew was one.

As he passed the door of the stairway toward the evening of the second day, he saw Miss Neville, who had just struggled so far, and was clinging to the door to windward. She was looking white and ill he thought, but when he told her so, she only laughed.

"Do you care to come for a turn?" he said. "It doesn't rain now, and I will take good care you don't fall," he added.

She consented, but the steamer was pitching so heavily that after a few turns Miss Neville said she would rather sit down.

So Carew provided her with a sheltered seat, brought a warm rug to wrap about her feet and seated himself beside her. It was now almost dark; a few stars shone here and there in the stormy sky.

The wind shrieked and whistled drearily. The deck was deserted. For quite a long time both were silent. Then Carew said in a half-whisper:

"You are trembling. You are not afraid of the storm, are you? It is nothing for the Bay I assure you."

"No—I am not afraid."

"You feel quite safe here with me?" he went on sinking his voice lower yet.

"Yes," she answered somewhat tremulously.

After a pause he laid his hand on hers as it rested on her knee, and said in an odd, deliberate kind of way:

"Will you let me take care of you always? I mean as my wife. I have grown to love you very dearly, and I think I could make you happy."

For perhaps a minute there was utter silence.

Then Carew withdrew his hand, saying hastily, and in an indefinably changed voice: "Ah! you do not care for me. Perhaps it is as well, and perhaps I had no right to ask you to do so. I forgot for a moment that I am a man under a cloud—a cloud that in all probability will never be lifted; for I tell you honestly I have no means of righting myself. Forget what I have said." The words and tone were hardly lover-like; but there was a slight, almost imperceptible quiver in the deep voice.

A small hand stole softly into his.

"I do care for you," said a happy little voice, "and I would take your word against all the world."

Another silence. Carew did not even press the hand he held. Then he said harshly, "But—suppose I cannot give you my word? Suppose I tell you that I am—what our fellow-passengers think I am?"

"I should not believe you," was the confident answer.

"But if I tell you that you *must* believe me?" His face as he looked down was very pale, and wore an expression she could hardly fathom.

She uttered a half-suppressed little cry, but she did not take her hand away—only nestled it further into his.

He grasped it almost painfully; then let it go.

"Foolish, trusting little woman," he said in a strange voice. "Must I give you proof that your trust is—misplaced?"

He held out his other hand to her. In its palm lay the ring. Even in the dim light she recognized it at once.

There was a curious, breathless pause, during which Carew never took his eyes from the girl's face.

"Well?" he quietly said at last. He felt her little fingers close tightly on his.

"I can't help it," she said brokenly. "I love you—I love you."

"And will you be my wife?"

She could not see his face, but his voice shook.

"Yes," she whispered, hiding her face in both her hands.

But the hands were gently drawn. In the semi-darkness she felt his arm come about her, and his moustache brush her lips.

"Darling!" he murmured passionately, "you shall never regret it—I swear," and in his eyes glittered something that looked like tears.

. . . . . .

Next morning one of the Englishmen who had come on board at Corunna and who had been ill ever since appeared on deck. As it happened, the first person he saw was Carew.

They greeted each other cordially, and after the fashion of old friends. This Englishman, by the way, was a well-known statesman, and a very good fellow, besides.

In the smoking-room that afternoon some one kindly put him on his guard as to Carew, and supplied the details.

"I thought I would mention it, you know," appended the man who had spoken; "I saw you speaking to him awhile ago."

"Thank you," was the dry answer. "I've known George Carew for a good many years. I think I have a pretty fair idea of his idiosyncrasies, and I don't think annexing other people's property is one of them. By the way, you may not have heard that he has come into the title, and is now Lord Evandale. I thought I'd mention it, you know," he added with a somewhat grim smile.

In the silence that followed, the speaker lit a fresh cigar, rose, and went out.

I blush to have to relate that during the remainder of that day a good many of the *Cobra's* passengers became suddenly imbued with the conviction of Carew's —or rather Lord Evandale's—innocence, and evinced as much. How their overtures were received, perhaps I need not say.

Joyce Neville was a little shy with her lover when she knew. But in the course of a starlit walk on deck he made that all right. She, it seemed, had had the idea that he was rather obscure and hard up than otherwise, at which confession he was a good deal touched.

I think it was on the evening before the *Cobra* got into Southampton that the head-steward made a startling discovery. Mrs. Bouverie's ring was found in a distant corner of the saloon, where it had been effectually concealed by an upstanding corner of the carpet.

Captain North publicly restored the ring to its owner that night at dinner. There was a very uncomfortable silence for a few moments. Every one had an awkward kind of feeling that some sort of apology should be made to the haughty-looking young man who was at present helping Miss Neville to claret. And every one had an equally awkward conviction that any apology or any explanation whatsoever would be worse than impossible.

The subject of their thoughts himself, however, forestalled anything of the kind. There was something

rather fine in his appearance just then, as he leaned back in his chair, and threw a keen glance first up and then down the table.

Miss Lennox mentally likened him to a Greek god (a titled Greek god, I presume), and flashed a melting look at him from under her long lashes.

But he was not looking at her.

"As Mrs. Bouverie is now, I hope, satisfied that I did not steal her ring," he said, in a cold, clear voice that penetrated to every corner of the long saloon, "I will explain my reason for refusing to turn out my pockets as the rest of you did. I possess a ring which is the exact fac-simile of that possessed by Mrs. Bouverie, and as I had the ring in my pocket on the evening in question, I naturally objected to its being mistaken for any one else's property. You are all at liberty to examine it, if Miss Neville chooses." As he spoke, he turned and slipped the "double" of Mrs. Bouverie's ring on the third finger of Joyce Neville's left hand. The look which accompanied the action spoke volumes.

There was a pause of intense astonishment; then a Babel of excited and wondering exclamations, in the midst of which Lord Evandale rose and went out on deck.

The rings were identical, with one exception. In one, the initials were N. C. In the other C. N.

Mrs. Bouverie looked crushed and unhappy. For of all things she dearly loved a lord. There was weeping and gnashing of teeth, too in the cabin of the Lennoxes.

Dr. A. Conan Doyle in this story has used his professional knowledge to good purpose, giving a pleasantly humorous cast to a pathetic plot. The tale first appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*.

A PHYSIOLOGIST'S WIFE.

PROFESSOR AINSLIE GREY had not come down to breakfast at the usual hour. The presentation chiming clock, which stood between the terra cotta busts of Claude Bernard and John Hunter upon the dining room mantelpiece, had rung out the half hour and the three-quarters. Now its golden hand was verging upon the nine, and yet there was no sign of the master of the house.

It was an unprecedented occurrence. During the twelve years that she had kept house for him, his younger sister had never known him a second behind his time. She sat now in front of the high silver coffee pot, uncertain whether to order the gong to be resounded or to wait on in silence. Either course might be a mistake. Her brother was not a man who permitted mistakes.

Miss Ainslie Grey was rather above the middle height, thin, with peering, puckered eyes and the rounded shoulders which mark the bookish woman. Her face was long and spare, flecked with color above the cheek-bones, with a reasonable, thoughtful forehead, and a dash of absolute obstinacy in her thin lips and prominent chin. Snow-white cuffs and collar, with a plain dark dress, cut with almost Quaker-like simplicity, bespoke the primness of her taste. An ebony cross hung over her flattened chest. She sat very upright in her chair, listening with raised eyebrows, and swinging her eyeglasses backward and forward with a nervous gesture which was peculiar to her.

Suddenly she gave a sharp, satisfied jerk of the head, and began to pour out the coffee. From outside there

came the dull thudding sound of heavy feet upon thick carpet. The door swung open, and the Professor entered with a quick, nervous step. He nodded to his sister and, seating himself at the other side of the table, began to open the small pile of letters which lay beside his plate.

Professor Ainslie Grey was at that time forty-three years of age—nearly twelve years older than his sister. His career had been a brilliant one. At Edinburgh, at Cambridge, and at Vienna he had laid the foundations of his great reputation, both in physiology and in zoology. His pamphlet, "On the Mesoblastic Origin of Excito-motor Nerve Roots," had won him his Fellowship of the Royal Society, and his researches "Upon the Nature of Bathybius, with Some Remarks upon Lithococci," had been translated into at least three European languages. He had been referred to by one of the greatest living authorities as being the very type and embodiment of all that was best in modern science. No wonder, then, that when the commercial city of Birchespool decided to create a medical school, they were only too glad to confer the Chair of Physiology upon Mr. Ainslie Grey. They valued him the more from the conviction that their class was only one step in his upward journey, and that the first vacancy would remove him to some more illustrious seat of learning.

In person he was not unlike his sister. The same eyes, the same contour, the same intellectual forehead. His lips, however, were firmer, and his long, thin lower jaw was sharper and more decided. He ran his finger and thumb down it from time to time as he glanced over his letters.

"Those maids are very noisy," he remarked, as a clack of tongues sounded in the distance.

"It is Sarah," said his sister; "I shall speak about it." She had handed over his coffee cup, and was sipping at her own, glancing furtively through her narrowed lids at the austere face of her brother.

"The first great advance of the human race," said the Professor, "was when, by the development of their

left frontal convolutions, they attained the power of speech. Their second advance was when they learned to control that power. Woman has not yet attained the second stage." He half closed his eyes as he spoke and thrust his chin forward, but as he ceased, he had a trick of suddenly opening both eyes very wide and staring sternly at his interlocutor.

"I am not garrulous, John," said his sister.

"No, Ada; in many respects you approach the superior or male type."

The Professor bowed over his egg with the manner of one who utters a courtly compliment; but the lady pouted, and gave an impatient little shrug of her shoulders.

"You were late this morning, John," she remarked, after a pause.

"Yes, Ada; I slept badly. Some little cerebral congestion, no doubt due to over-stimulation of the centres of thought. I have been a little disturbed in my mind."

His sister stared across at him in undisguised astonishment. The Professor's mental processes had hitherto been as regular as his habits. Twelve years' continual intercourse had taught her that he lived in a serene and rarefied atmosphere of scientific calm, high above the petty emotions which affect humbler minds.

"You are surprised, Ada," he remarked. "Well, I cannot wonder at it. I should have been surprised myself if I had been told that I was so sensitive to vascular influences. For, after all, all disturbances are vascular if you probe them deep enough. I am thinking of getting married."

"Not Mrs. O'James?" cried Ada Grey, laying down her egg spoon.

"My dear, you have the feminine quality of receptivity very remarkably developed. Mrs. O'James is the lady in question."

"But you know so little of her. The Esdailes themselves know so little. She is really only an acquaintance, although she is staying at the Lindens. Would it not be wise to speak to Mrs. Esdaile first, John?"

"I do not think, Ada, that Mrs. Esdaile is at all likely to say anything which would materially affect my course of action. I have given the matter due consideration. The scientific mind is slow at arriving at conclusions, but, having once formed them, it is not prone to change. Matrimony is the natural condition of the human race, and indeed of all races, save those lower forms of life which preceded the differentiation of sex. I have, as you know, been so engaged in academical and other work that I have had no time to devote to merely personal questions. It is different now, and I see no valid reason why I should forego this opportunity of seeking a suitable helpmate."

"And you are engaged?"

"Hardly that, Ada. I ventured yesterday to indicate to the lady that I was prepared to submit to the common lot of humanity. I shall wait upon her after my morning lecture, and learn how far my proposals meet with her acquiescence. But you frown, Ada!"

His sister started, and made an effort to conceal her expression of annoyance. She even stammered out some few words of congratulation, but a vacant look had come into her brother's eyes, and he was evidently not listening to her. "Frown," he muttered thoughtfully —"frown!" Rising from the table, he turned over the pages of a thick volume which lay upon a desk in the window. Then, with a quick nervous gesture, he drew down his left shirt cuff, and wrote hurriedly across it. The memorandum was "Frown—what origin? *Vide* Darwin, 'Expression of Emotions'—drawing forward of *occipito-frontalis.*" His sister waited patiently, for she was accustomed to see him dive down every scientific by-path which led out of the main track of conversation.

"I am sure, John," she said, when he had resumed his seat, "that I wish you the happiness which you deserve. If I hesitated at all, it is because I know how much is at stake, and because the thing is so sudden, so unexpected." Her thin white hand stole up to the black cross upon her bosom. "These are moments

when we need guidance, John. If I could persuade you to turn to spiritual——"

The Professor waved the suggestion away with a deprecating hand. "It is useless to reopen that question," he said. "We cannot argue upon it. You assume more than I can grant. I am forced to dispute your premises. We have no common basis."

His sister sighed. "You have no faith," she said.

"I have faith in those great evolutionary forces which are leading the human race to some unknown but elevated goal."

"You believe in nothing."

"On the contrary, my dear Ada, I believe in the differentiation of protoplasm."

She shook her head sadly. It was the one subject upon which she ventured to dispute her brother's infallibility.

"This is rather beside the question," remarked the Professor, folding up his napkin. "If I am not mistaken, there is some possibility of another matrimonial event occurring in the family. Eh, Ada? What!" His small eyes glittered with sly facetiousness as he shot a twinkle at his sister. She sat very stiff, and traced patterns upon the cloth with the sugar tongs.

"Dr. James McMurdo O'Brien——" said the Professor, sonorously.

"Don't, John, don't!" cried Miss Ainslie Grey.

"Dr. James McMurdo O'Brien," continued her brother, inexorably, "is a man who has already made his mark upon the science of the day. He is my first and my most distinguished pupil. I assure you, Ada, that his 'Remarks upon the Bile-Pigments, with Special Reference to Urobilin,' is likely to live as a classic. It is not too much to say that he has revolutionized our views about urobilin."

He paused, but his sister sat silent, with bent head and flushed cheeks. The little jet cross rose and fell with her hurried breathings.

"Dr. James McMurdo O'Brien has, as you know, the offer of the physiological chair at Melbourne. He has

been in Australia five years, and has a brilliant future before him. To-day he leaves for Edinburgh, and in two months' time he goes out to assume his new duties. You know his feeling toward you. It rests with you as to whether he goes out alone. Speaking for myself, I cannot imagine any higher mission for a woman of culture than to go through life in the company of a man who is capable of such a research as that which Dr. James McMurdo O'Brien has brought to a successful conclusion."

"He has not spoken to me," murmured the lady.

"Ah, there are signs which are more subtle than speech," said her brother, wagging his head. "But you are pale. Your vasomotor system is excited. Your arterioles have contracted." He scribbled again upon his shirt cuff. "Let me entreat you to compose yourself. I think I hear the carriage. I fancy that you may have a visitor this morning, Ada. You will excuse me now." With a quick glance at the clock he strode off into the hall, and within a few minutes he was rattling in his quiet, well-appointed brougham through the brick-lined streets of Birchespool.

His lecture over, Professor Ainslie Grey paid a visit to his laboratory, where he adjusted several scientific instruments, made a note as to the progress of three separate infusions of bacteria, cut half a dozen sections with a microtome, and finally resolved the difficulties of seven different gentlemen who were pursuing researches in as many separate lines of inquiry. Having thus conscientiously and methodically completed the routine of his duties, he returned to his carriage and ordered the coachman to drive him to the Lindens. His face as he drove was cold and impassive, but he drew his fingers from time to time down his prominent chin with a jerky, twitchy movement.

The Lindens was an old-fashioned, ivy-clad house, which had once been in the country, but was now caught in the long red-brick feelers of the growing city. It still stood back from the road in the privacy of its own grounds. A winding path, lined with laurel bushes,

led to the arched and porticoed entrance. To the right was a lawn. Under the shadow of a hawthorn a lady sat in a garden chair, with a book in her hands. At the click of the gate she started, and the Professor, catching sight of her, strode across the lawn in her direction.

"What! won't you go in and see Mrs. Esdaile?" she asked, sweeping out from under the shadow of the hawthorn. She was a small woman, strongly feminine, from the rich coils of her light-colored hair to the dainty garden slipper which peeped from under her cream-tinted dress. One tiny well-gloved hand was outstretched in greeting, while the other pressed a thick, green-covered volume against her side. Her decision and quick tactful manner bespoke the mature woman of the world; but her upraised face had preserved a girlish and even infantile expression of innocence in its large, fearless gray eyes, and sensitive, humorous mouth. Mrs. O'James was a widow, and she was two-and-thirty years of age; but neither fact could have been deduced from her appearance.

"You will surely go in and see Mrs. Esdaile," she repeated, glancing up at him with eyes which had in them something between a challenge and a caress.

"I did not come to see Mrs. Esdaile," he answered, with no relaxation of his cold and grave manner; "I came to see you."

"I am sure I should be highly honored," she said, with just the slightest little touch of brogue in her accent. "What are the students to do without their Professor?"

"I have already completed my academical duties. Take my arm, and we shall walk in the sunshine. Surely we cannot wonder that Eastern people should have made a deity of the sun. It is the great beneficent force of nature—man's ally against cold, sterility, and all that is abhorrent to him. What were you reading?"

"Beale's 'Matter and Life.'"

The Professor raised his thick eyebrows. "Beale!" he said, and then again in a kind of whisper, "Beale!"

"You differ from him?" she asked.

"It is not I who differ from him. I am only a monad—a thing of no moment. The whole tendency of the highest plane of modern thought differs from him. He defends the indefensible. He is an excellent observer, but a feeble reasoner. I should not recommend you to found your conclusions upon 'Beale.'"

"I must read 'Nature's Chronicle' to counteract his pernicious influence," said Mrs. O'James, with a soft, cooing laugh. "Nature's Chronicle" was one of the many books in which Professor Ainslie Grey had enforced the negative doctrines of scientific agnosticism.

"It is a faulty work," said he; "I cannot recommend it. I would rather refer you to the standard writings of some of my older and more eloquent colleagues."

There was a pause in their talk as they paced up and down on the green velvet-like lawn.

"Have you thought at all," he asked, at last, "of the matter upon which I spoke to you last night?"

She said nothing, but walked by his side with her eyes averted and her face aslant.

"I would not hurry you unduly," he continued. "I know that it is a matter which can scarcely be decided off-hand. In my own case it cost me some thought before I ventured to make the suggestion. I am not an emotional man, but I am conscious in your presence of the great evolutionary instinct which makes either sex the complement of the other."

"You believe in love, then?" she asked, with a twinkling, upward glance.

"I am forced to."

"And yet you can deny the soul?"

"How far these questions are psychic, and how far material, is still *sub judice*," said the Professor, with an air of toleration. "Protoplasm may prove to be the physical basis of love, as well as of life."

"How inflexible you are!" she exclaimed; "you would draw love down to the level of physics."

"Or draw physics up to the level of love."

"Come, that is much better," she cried, with her sympathetic laugh. "That is really very pretty, and

puts science in quite a delightful light." Her eyes sparkled, and she tossed her chin with the pretty, willful air of a woman who is mistress of the situation.

"I have reason to believe," said the Professor, "that my position here will prove to be only a stepping-stone to some wider scene of scientific activity. Yet, even here, my chair brings me in some fifteen hundred pounds a year, which is supplemented by a few hundreds from my books. I should therefore be in a position to provide you with those comforts to which you are accustomed. So much for my pecuniary position. As to my constitution, it has always been sound. I have never suffered from any illness in my life save fleeting attacks of cephalalgia, the result of too prolonged a stimulation of the centres of cerebration. My father and mother had no sign of any morbid diathesis, but I will not conceal from you that my grandfather was afflicted with podagra."

Mrs. O'James looked startled. "Is that very serious?" she asked.

"It is gout," said the Professor.

"Oh, is that all? It sounded much worse than that."

"It is a grave taint, but I trust that I shall not be a victim to atavism. I have laid these facts before you because they are factors which cannot be overlooked in forming your decision. May I ask now whether you see your way to accepting my proposal?" He paused in his walk, and looked earnestly down at her.

A struggle was evidently going on in her mind. Her eyes were cast down, her little slipper tapped the lawn, and her fingers played nervously with her chatelain. Suddenly, with a sharp, quick gesture which had in it something of abandon and recklessness, she held out her hand to her companion.

"I accept," she said.

They were standing under the shadow of the hawthorn. He stooped gravely down, and kissed her glove-covered fingers.

"I trust that you may never have cause to regret your decision," he said.

"I trust that you never may," she cried, with a heaving breast. There were tears in her eyes, and her lips twitched with some strong emotion.

"Come into the sunshine again," said he. "It is the great restorative. Your nerves are shaken. Some little congestion of the medulla and pons. It is always instructive to reduce psychic or emotional conditions to their physical equivalents. You feel that your anchor is still firm in a bottom of ascertained fact."

"But it is so dreadfully unromantic," said Mrs. O'James, with her old twinkle.

"Romance is the offspring of imagination and of ignorance. Where science throws her calm, clear light, there is, happily, no room for romance."

"But is not love romance?" she asked.

"Not at all. Love has been taken away from the poets, and has been brought within the domain of true science. It may prove to be one of the great cosmic elementary forces. When the atom of hydrogen draws the atom of chlorine toward it to form the perfected molecule of hydrochloric acid, the force which it exerts may be intrinsically similar to that which draws me to you. Attraction and repulsion appear to be the primary forces. This is attraction."

"And here is repulsion," said Mrs. O'James, as a stout, florid lady came sweeping across the lawn in their direction. "So glad you have come out, Mrs. Esdaile! Here is Professor Grey."

"How do you do, Professor?" said the lady, with some little pomposity of manner. "You were very wise to stay out here on so lovely a day. Is it not heavenly?"

"It is certainly very fine weather," the Professor answered.

"Listen to the wind sighing in the trees!" cried Mrs. Esdaile, holding up one finger. "It is nature's lullaby. Could you not imagine it, Professor Grey, to be the whisperings of angels?"

"The idea had not occurred to me, Madam."

"Ah, Professor, I have always the same complaint

against you. A want of *rapport* with the deeper meanings of nature. Shall I say a want of imagination? You do not feel an emotional thrill at the singing of that thrush?"

"I confess that I am not conscious of one, Mrs. Esdaile."

"Or at the delicate tint of that background of leaves? See the rich greens!"

"Chlorophyll," murmured the Professor.

"Science is so hopelessly prosaic. It dissects and labels and loses sight of the great things in its attention to the little ones. You have a poor opinion of woman's intellect, Professor Grey. I think that I have heard you say so."

"It is a question of avoirdupois," said the Professor, closing his eyes and shrugging his shoulders. "The female cerebrum averages two ounces less in weight than the male. No doubt there are exceptions. Nature is always elastic."

"But the heaviest thing is not always the strongest," said Mrs. O'James, laughing. "Isn't there a law of compensation in science? May we not hope to make up in quality for what we lack in quantity?"

"I think not," remarked the Professor, gravely. "But there is your luncheon gong. No, thank you, Mrs. Esdaile, I cannot stay. My carriage is waiting. Good-bye. Good-bye, Mrs. O'James." He raised his hat and stalked slowly away among the laurel bushes.

"He has no taste," said Mrs. Esdaile—"no eye for beauty."

"On the contrary," Mrs. O'James answered, with a saucy little jerk of the chin. "He has just asked me to be his wife."

II.

As Prof. Ainslie Grey ascended the steps of his house, the hall door opened and a dapper gentleman stepped briskly out. He was somewhat sallow in the face, with beady black eyes, and a short black beard with an aggressive bristle. Thought and work had

left their traces upon his face, but he moved with the brisk activity of a man who had not yet bade good-bye to his youth.

"I'm in luck's way," he cried. "I wanted to see you."

"Then come back into the library," said the Professor; "you must stay and have lunch with us."

The two men entered the hall, and the Professor led the way into his private sanctum. He motioned his companion into an arm-chair.

"I trust that you have been successful, O'Brien," said he. "I should be loth to exercise any undue pressure upon my sister Ada; but I have given her to understand that there is no one whom I should prefer for a brother-in-law to my most brilliant scholar, the author of 'Some Remarks upon the Bile-Pigments, with Special Reference to Urobilin.' "

"You are very kind, Prof. Grey—you have always been very kind," said the other. "I approached Miss Grey upon the subject; she did not say No."

"She said Yes, then?"

"No; she proposed to leave the matter open until my return from Edinburgh. I go to-day, as you know, and I hope to commence my research to-morrow."

"On the comparative anatomy of the vermiform appendix, by James McMurdo O'Brien," said the Professor, sonorously. "It is a glorious subject—a subject which lies at the very root of evolutionary philosophy."

"Ah! she is the dearest girl," cried O'Brien, with a sudden little spurt of Celtic enthusiasm—"she is the soul of truth and of honor."

"The vermiform appendix——" began the Professor.

"She is an angel from heaven," interrupted the other. "I fear that it is my advocacy of scientific freedom in religious thought which stands in my way with her."

"You must not truckle upon that point. You must be true to your convictions; let there be no compromise there."

"My reason is true to agnosticism, and yet I am conscious of a void—a vacuum. I had feelings at the old church at home, between the scent of the incense and

the roll of the organ, such as I have never experienced in the laboratory or the lecture room."

"Sensuous—purely sensuous," said the Professor, rubbing his chin. "Vague hereditary tendencies, stirred into life by the stimulation of the nasal and auditory nerves."

"Maybe so, maybe so," the younger man answered thoughtfully. "But this was not what I wished to speak to you about. Before I enter your family, your sister and you have a claim to know all that I can tell you about my career. Of my worldly prospects I have already spoken to you. There is only one point which I have omitted to mention. I am a widower."

The Professor raised his eyebrows. "This is news indeed," said he.

"I married shortly after my arrival in Australia. Miss Thurston was her name. I met her in society. It was a most unhappy match."

Some painful emotion possessed him. His quick, expressive features quivered, and his white hands tightened upon the arms of the chair. The Professor turned away towards the window. "You are the best judge," he remarked; "but I should not think that it was necessary to go into details."

"You have a right to know everything—you and Miss Grey. It is not a matter on which I can well speak to her direct. Poor Jinny was the best of women, but she was open to flattery, and she was liable to be misled by designing persons. She was untrue to me, Grey. It is a hard thing to say of the dead, but she was untrue to me. She fled to Auckland with a man whom she had known before her marriage. The brig which carried them foundered, and not a soul was saved."

"This is very painful, O'Brien," said the Professor, with a deprecatory motion of his hand. "I cannot see, however, how it affects your relation to my sister."

"I have eased my conscience," said O'Brien, rising from his chair; "I have told you all there is to tell. I should not like the story to reach you through any lips but my own."

"You are right, O'Brien. Your action has been most honorable and considerate. But you are not to blame in the matter, save that perhaps you showed a little precipitancy in choosing a life-partner without due care and inquiry."

O'Brien drew his hand across his eyes. "Poor girl!" he cried. "God help me, I love her still! But I must go."

"You will lunch with us?"

"No, Professor; I have my packing still to do. I have already bade Miss Grey adieu. In two months I shall see you again."

"You will probably find me a married man."

"Married!"

"Yes, I have been thinking of it."

"My dear professor, let me congratulate you with all my heart. I had no idea. Who is the lady?"

"Mrs. O'James is her name—a widow of the same nationality as yourself. But to return to matters of importance. I should be very happy to see the proofs of your paper upon the vermiform appendix. I may be able to furnish you with material for a footnote or two."

"Your assistance will be invaluable to me," said O'Brien with enthusiasm, and the two men parted in the hall. The Professor walked back into the dining room, where his sister was already seated at the luncheon table.

"I shall be married at the Registrar's," he remarked; "I should strongly recommend you to do the same."

Prof. Ainslie Grey was as good as his word. A fortnight's cessation of his classes gave him an opportunity which was too good to let pass. Mrs. O'James was an orphan, without relations and almost without friends in the country. There was no obstacle in the way of a speedy wedding. They were married, accordingly, in the quietest manner possible, and went off to Cambridge together, where the Professor and his charming wife were present at several academical observances, and varied the routine of their honeymoon by incursions

into biological laboratories and medical libraries. Scientific friends were loud in their congratulations, not only upon Mrs. Grey's beauty, but upon the unusual quickness and intelligence which she displayed in discussing physiological questions. The Professor was himself astonished at the accuracy of her information. "You have a remarkable range of knowledge for a woman, Jeannette," he remarked upon more than one occasion. He was even prepared to admit that her cerebrum might be of the normal weight.

One foggy, drizzling morning they returned to Birchespool, for the next day would reopen the session, and Professor Ainslie Grey prided himself upon having never once in his life failed to appear in his lecture room at the very stroke of the hour. Miss Ada Grey welcomed them with a constrained cordiality, and handed over the keys of office to the new mistress. Mrs. Grey pressed her warmly to remain, but she explained that she had already accepted an invitation which would engage her for some months. The same evening she departed for the South of England.

A couple of days later the maid carried a card just after breakfast into the library where the Professor sat revising his morning lecture. It announced the re-arrival of Dr. James McMurdo O'Brien. Their meeting was effusively genial on the part of the younger man, and coldly precise on that of his former teacher.

"You see there have been changes," said the Professor.

"So I heard. Miss Grey told me in her letters and I read the notice in the *British Medical Journal*. So it's really married you are. How quickly and quietly you have managed it all!"

"I am constitutionally averse to anything in the nature of show or ceremony. My wife is a sensible woman—I may even go to the length of saying that, for a woman, she is abnormally sensible. She quite agreed with me in the course which I have adopted."

"And your research on Vallisneria?"

"This matrimonial incident has interrupted it, but I

have resumed my classes, and we shall soon be quite in harness again."

"I must see Miss Grey before I leave England. We have corresponded, and I think that all will be well. She must come out with me. I don't think I could go without her."

The Professor shook his head. "Your nature is not so weak as you pretend," he said. "Sexual questions of this sort are, after all, quite subordinate to the great duties of life."

O'Brien smiled. "You would have me take out my Celtic soul and put in a Saxon one," he said. "Either my brain is too small or my heart is too big. But when may I call and pay my respects to Mrs. Grey? Will she be at home this afternoon?"

"She is at home now. Come into the morning room. She will be glad to make your acquaintance."

They walked across the linoleum-paved hall. The Professor opened the door of the room and walked in, followed by his friend. Mrs. Grey was sitting in a basket chair by the window, light and fairy-like in a loose-flowing pink morning gown. Seeing a visitor, she rose and swept toward them. The Professor heard a dull thud behind him. O'Brien had fallen back into a chair, with his hand pressed tight to his side. "Jinny!" he gasped, "Jinny!"

Mrs. Grey stopped dead in her advance, and stared at him with a face from which every expression had been struck out save one of utter astonishment and horror. Then, with a sharp intaking of the breath, she reeled, and would have fallen, had not the Professor thrown his long nervous arm round her.

"Try this sofa," said he. She sank back among the cushions with the same white, cold, dead look upon her face. The Professor stood with his back to the empty fireplace, and glanced from the one to the other.

"So, O'Brien," he said at last, "you have already made the acquaintance of my wife?"

"Your wife!" cried his friend hoarsely. "She is no wife of yours. God help me, she is my wife!"

The Professor stood rigidly upon the hearth rug. His long, thin fingers were intertwined, and his head had sunk a little forward. His two companions had eyes only for each other.

"Jinny!" said he.

"James!"

"How could you leave me so, Jinny? How could you have the heart to do it? I thought you were dead. I mourned for your death—ay, and you made me mourn for you living. You have withered my life."

She made no answer, but lay back among the cushions with her eyes still fixed upon him.

"Why do you not speak?"

"Because you are right, James. I have treated you cruelly—shamefully. But it is not as bad as you think."

"You fled with De Horta."

"No, I did not. At the last moment my better nature prevailed. He went alone. But I was ashamed to come back after what I had written to you. I could not face you. I took passage alone to England under a new name, and here I have lived ever since. It seemed to me that I was beginning life again. I knew that you thought I was drowned. Who could have dreamed that fate would throw us together again! When the Professor asked me——" She stopped and gave a gasp for breath.

"You are faint," said the Professor—"keep the head low; it aids the cerebral circulation." He flattened down the cushion. "I am sorry to leave you, O'Brien; but I have my class duties to look to. Possibly I may find you here when I return." With a grim and rigid face he strode out of the room. Not one of the three hundred students who listened to his lecture saw any change in his manner and appearance, or could have guessed that the austere gentleman in front of them had found out at last how hard it is to rise above one's humanity. The lecture over, he performed his routine duties in the laboratory, and then drove back to his own house. He did not enter by the front door, but passed through the garden to the folding glass casement

which led out of the morning room. As he approached, he heard his wife's voice and O'Brien's in loud and animated talk. He paused among the rose-bushes, uncertain whether to interrupt them or no. Nothing was further from his nature than to play the eavesdropper; but as he stood, still hesitating, words fell upon his ears which struck him rigid and motionless.

"You are still my wife, Jinny," said O'Brien; "I forgive you from the bottom of my heart. I love you, and I have never ceased to love you, though you had forgotten me."

"No, James, my heart was always in Melbourne. I have always been yours. I thought that it was better for you that I should seem to be dead."

"You must choose between us now, Jinny. If you determine to remain here, I shall not open my lips. There shall be no scandal. If, on the other hand, you come with me, it's little I care about the world's opinion. Perhaps I am as much to blame as you. I thought too much of my work, and too little of my wife."

The Professor heard the cooing, caressing laugh which he knew so well.

"I shall go with you, James," she said.

"And the Professor——?"

"The poor Professor! But he will not mind much, James; he has no heart."

"We must tell him our resolution."

"There is no need," said Professor Ainslie Grey, stepping in through the open casement. "I have overheard the latter part of your conversation. I hesitated to interrupt you before you came to a conclusion."

O'Brien stretched out his hand and took that of the woman. They stood together with the sunshine on their faces. The Professor stood on the casement with his hands behind his back, and his long black shadow fell between them.

"You have come to a wise decision," said he. "Go back to Australia together, and let what has passed be blotted out of your lives."

"But you—you——" stammered O'Brien.

The Professor waved his hand. "Never trouble about me," he said.

The woman gave a gasping cry. "What can I do or say?" she wailed. "How could I have foreseen this? I thought my old life was dead. But it has come back again, with all its hopes and its desires. What can I say to you, Ainslie? I have brought shame and disgrace upon a worthy man. I have blasted your life. How you must hate and loathe me! I wish to God that I had never been born!"

"I neither hate nor loathe you, Jeannette," said the Professor quietly. "You are wrong in regretting your birth, for you have a worthy mission before you in aiding the life work of a man who has shown himself capable of the highest order of scientific research. I cannot with justice blame you personally for what has occurred. How far the individual monad is to be held responsible for hereditary and ingrained tendencies is a question upon which science has not yet said her last word."

He stood with his fingertips touching, and his body inclined as one who is gravely expounding a difficult and impersonal subject. O'Brien had stepped forward to say something, but the other's attitude and manner froze the words upon his lips. Condolence would be an impertinence to one who could so easily merge his private griefs in broad questions of abstract philosophy.

"It is needless to prolong the situation," the Professor continued, in the same measured tones. "My brougham stands at the door. I beg that you will use it as your own. Perhaps it would be as well that you should leave the town without unnecessary delay. Your things, Jeannette, shall be forwarded."

O'Brien hesitated with a hanging head. "I hardly dare offer you my hand," he said.

"On the contrary, I think that of the three of us you come best out of the affair. You have nothing to be ashamed of."

"Your sister——"

"I shall see that the matter is put to her in its true

light. Good-bye! Let me have a copy of your recent research. Good-bye, Jeannette!"

"Good-bye!" Their hands met, and for one short moment their eyes also. It was only a glance, but for the first and last time a woman's intuition cast a light for itself into the dark places of a strong man's soul. She gave a little gasp, and her other hand rested an instant, white and light as thistledown, upon his shoulder.

"James, James!" she cried. "Don't you see that he is stricken to the heart?"

He smiled gently and turned her quietly away from him. "It is a little sudden," he said. "But I am not an emotional man. I have my duties—my research on Vallisneria. The brougham is there. Your cloak is in the hall. Tell John where you wish to be driven. He will bring you any things you need. Now go." His last two words were so sudden, so volcanic, in such contrast to his measured voice and mask-like face, that they swept the two away from him. He closed the door behind them, and paced slowly up and down the room. Then he passed into the library and looked out over the wire blind. The carriage was rolling away. He caught a last glimpse of the woman who had been his wife. He saw the feminine droop of her head, and the long curve of her beautiful arm.

"She is weeping," he muttered. "She is sorry to leave me." Then he pulled down his left cuff and scribbled a memorandum. It was: "Influence of emotion upon the lachrymal secretion—how and why?"

III.

There was little scandal about this singular domestic incident. The Professor had few personal friends, and seldom went into society. His marriage had been so quiet that most of his colleagues had never ceased to regard him as a bachelor. Mrs. Esdaile and a few others might talk, but their field for gossip was limited.

The Professor was as punctual as ever at his classes, and as zealous in directing the laboratory work of those who studied under him. His own private researches

were pushed on with feverish energy. In vain his friends assured him that such a life must undermine his health. He only lengthened his hours of work.

Gradually under this discipline a change came over his appearance. His features, always inclined to gauntness, became even sharper and more pronounced. There were deep lines about his temples and across his brow. His cheek was sunken and his complexion bloodless. His knees gave under him when he walked, and once when passing out of his lecture room he fell and had to be assisted to his carriage.

This was just before the end of the session; and soon after the holidays commenced, the professors who still remained in Birchespool were shocked to hear that their brother of the Chair of Physiology had sunk so low that no hopes could be entertained of his recovery. Two eminent physicians had consulted over his case without being able to give a name to the affection from which he suffered. A steadily-decreasing vitality appeared to be the only symptom—a bodily weakness which left the mind unclouded. He was much interested himself in his own case, and made notes of his subjective sensations as an aid to diagnosis. Of his approaching end he spoke in his usual unemotional and somewhat pedantic fashion. "It is the assertion," he said, "of the liberty of the individual cell as opposed to the cell commune. It is the dissolution of a co-operative society. The process is one of great interest."

And so one gray morning his co-operative society dissolved. His two physicians felt some slight embarrassment when called upon to fill in his certificate.

"It is difficult to give it a name," said one.

"Very," said the other.

"If he were not such an unemotional man, I should have said that he had died from some sudden nervous shock—from what the vulgar call a broken heart."

"I don't think poor Grey was that sort of a man at all."

"Let us call it cardiac, anyhow," said the older physician. So they did so.

All lovers of animals will be delighted with the intelligent hero of this charming sketch by Ludovic Halévy. It has been made into English for ROMANCE by Z. S. Crooker.

"NIG."

"DON'T be afraid, sir. You will not miss the train. I've taken travellers to the train for five years, and I have never made them miss the train. Do you hear, sir? Never!"

"However——"

"Oh! don't look at your watch. There is one thing that you don't know, which you ought to know, but which your watch will not tell you. That is that the train is always fifteen minutes late. I never knew it to be on time."

But it was one of those rare days when the train was exactly on time, and I was left.

I now had to wait three long hours in a lonely village in one of the Cantons of Switzerland. It was hemmed in by two dismal-looking mountains, the tops of which were covered with snow.

How was I to pass these hours? I invoked the help of the bystanders. There was another general response: "Go and see the whirlpool. There is nothing to equal it in the country." And where was the whirlpool? "Upon the mountain to the right, about half-way up, —but the road is very bad." They advised me to take a guide, and there below in that little white cottage, with the green blinds, I could find the best guide in the country: an honest man, Father Simon.

I went and knocked on the door of the cottage. An old woman came and opened it.

"Father Simon?'

"It is his house,—but is it to go to the whirlpool?"

"Yes! it is to go there."

"Ah, well! Father Simon has already been there this morning. He is tired, and does not wish to go

again,—but don't be alarmed. There is some one to take his place. There is Nig."

"Send for Nig."

"But you must know beforehand Nig is not a person."

"Not a person?"

"No, it is our dog. He will show you very well—as well as my man. He is used to it."

"How used to it?"

"You see that, for years and years, Father Simon has taken Nig with him, so he has learned all the roads and now he can make the trips alone. He has often taken travellers, and we have always been complimented by them. As for his intelligence, have no fear. He has as much as you or I."

"But is it not necessary to speak?"

"If it were to show you the monuments, yes, for then it would be necessary to give you the history and the dates, but this time there is nothing to see but the beauties of nature. Take Nig. Besides, it will be cheaper. It is three francs for my man; with Nig it is but thirty sous, and Nig will show you as much for thirty sous as my man will for three francs."

"Very well; where is Nig?"

"He is asleep by the fire. He has already taken some people this morning to the whirlpool. Shall I call him?"

"Yes, call him."

"Nig! Nig!"

He came, with a bound, through the window. He was a homely enough little black animal. His long hair was curly and twisted into knots. He did not look like very much on the outside, but he carried himself with a certain air of gravity, of decision and of importance. He immediately looked me over closely, precisely; casting his eyes from my head to my feet, with an air that said very plainly, "It is a traveller, and he wishes to go to the whirlpool."

To lose one train was enough for one day, and I did not care to expose myself to that misfortune a second time, so I explained to this honest woman that I had but three hours to make the trip.

"Oh! I know that perfectly well. You can take the train at four o'clock. Do not fear. Nig will bring you back in time. Go, Nig! Start, my boy,—all ready!"

But Nig did not appear to be at all disposed to start. He remained immovable, watching his mistress with apparent anxiety.

"Ah! I am so foolish!" said the old woman. "I had forgotten the sugar." She went and brought four pieces of sugar from the closet and gave them to me.

"See! this is why he would not start. You have now got the pieces of sugar. See! Nig, the gentleman has the sugar. Now. Go! my boy. To the whirlpool! To the whirlpool! To the whirlpool!" She repeated these words, speaking very slowly and distinctly. Nig answered the words of his mistress with little nods of his head, which quickened at the last with a show of impatience, as if to say, "Yes! Yes! I know. The gentleman has some pieces of sugar, and we go to the whirlpool. I understand. Do you take me for a numskull?" and without waiting to hear the third "To the whirlpool" of Madame Simon, Nig turned on his paws, came and raised his face to mine with a look as if showing me the way, and said as well as it is permitted to a dog to speak,

"Let us go. Come, you!"

I followed him obediently. We went down the road, he ahead and I behind. We were obliged to cross the entire village. Some children who were playing in the road recognized my guide.

"Here, Nig! Good-day, Nig!"

They wished to play with the dog, but he turned away his head with an air of disdain,—the air of a dog who had no time to amuse himself—of a dog who had to make his living and was earning thirty *sous*. One of the children said to the other:

"Let him be. He is taking that gentleman to the whirlpool. Good-day, Mister!"

The rest all laughed and repeated after him:

"Good-day, Mister!"

I smiled reluctantly. I felt embarrassed,—even a

little humiliated. I was, in fact, dominated by this animal. He was, for the time being, my master. He knew where he went, and I did not. I was anxious to get out of the village, to find myself alone with him, and face to face with the beauties of Nature.

The beauties of Nature, so far, were a frightful road, dusty and burning under a leaden sun. The dog travelled on with a quick step that tired me to keep up with him. I tried to moderate his ardor. "Nig! my boy, not so fast." Nig dropped his ears, evidently not wishing to hear his fellow-traveller, and when I attempted to seat myself by the side of a tree, he exhibited signs of impatience. He barked in a little sharp voice, and looked at me in a very ferocious way. Evidently it was not the proper thing to stop there. Nig pawed the ground so sharply and vigorously that I arose to follow him. He instantly became quiet and began to trot gayly ahead of me. I understood him, and he was contented.

Some minutes afterward, we came to a beautiful pathway, flowery, shady, full of the perfume of roses and filled with the murmur of the springs. Nig had already entered the wood, and had disappeared at a gallop. I followed him, a little out of breath. I had not gone a dozen paces when I found Nig, who waited for me, head in the air, and eyes sparkling. Where he stopped was a grassy arbor, made musical by the song of a rippling brook. There I saw an old bench, and the eyes of Nig turned impatiently from me to the bench. I had begun to understand the language of dogs.

"Now," said he to me, "behold a place to rest. It is pleasant here and cool. You were foolish to wish to rest in the open wood. Now sit down. I will permit you to do so."

I stopped and seated myself. I lighted a cigar. I made a motion to offer one to Nig. Perhaps he smoked, but I thought that he would prefer a morsel of sugar. He caught it very adroitly and cracked it with his great white teeth. Then he lay down, and slept at my feet. He was evidently in the habit of taking a nap in this lovely spot.

He slept about ten minutes. I had by this time become accustomed to the whole thing. Nig had inspired me with perfect confidence. I was resolved to obey him blindly. He arose, casting his eyes from side to side, which meant, "Let us start, my friend;" and now behold us, like two old comrades, travelling slowly along under the trees. The dog enjoyed the charm, the silence and the beauty of the surroundings.

Before this, while we had been exposed to the fierce sun, he had travelled with quick, short steps, to escape the dust and the heat; but now, refreshed and rested, he walked for the pleasure of walking under the green shade of the trees.

A road now appeared toward the left; a short hesitation on the part of Nig. He reflected. Then he passed on and continued his route straight before him, but not without a certain lack of confidence in his manner, and now I see him stop. Ah! he was almost cheated that time. He is coming back, and now we take the new road to the left. At the end of a dozen paces he brings me into a sort of circle, and then, with his nose in the air, invites me to contemplate a very respectable wall of rough rocks, forming a rude amphitheatre. When Nig thought that I had inspected this place enough, he made a right-about-face, and we went back again to the other road. Nig had evidently forgotten to show me the Circle of Rocks, a light enough fault in a dog, but which he had quickly rectified.

The route now became very steep, very dangerous and difficult. I advanced more slowly and with infinite precautions. The dog sprang lightly from rock to rock, but he did not abandon me. He waited for me, watching my steps carefully with the most touching solicitude. At last I began to hear a boiling and roaring noise. Nig made a great demonstration. "Courage!" said he. "Courage! We have arrived. Now you will see the whirlpool."

It was indeed a whirlpool. The stream was modest enough, and the falls equally modest, but the water leaped from rock to rock, crossing and recrossing, and

fell sparkling into a great basin of rock, around the edge of which the water fumed and whirled. I should never have been consoled for my laborious tramp by seeing such an ordinary scene if it had not been for my companion, the brave Nig, who was to me much more interesting and remarkable than the whirlpool. On each side of this stream was a little Swiss *châlet*, or dairy, attended each by a little Swiss maiden, one a brunette, the other a blonde. Each was dressed in the national costume, and was awaiting anxiously my arrival. It seemed to me that the blonde had the prettier eyes, and I had taken three or four steps in that direction when Nig, barking loudly and furiously, absolutely prevented my advance in that direction. Had he a preference for the little brunette? I changed my direction and all went well. The dog, appeased as if by enchantment, went ahead to a seat at the table in front of the *châlet* of his young friend. I asked for a glass of milk. The girl went into the house, and Nig followed behind. By a half-opened window I soon saw the bright shining eyes of my dog. The little wretch! He was being served before me! It is he who is always first. I could see him there now with his great basin of milk.

After a while he appeared, with great white globules of milk dripping from his mustache, and condescended to wait for me while I drank my fill. I gave him a piece of sugar, and we both appeared to be well satisfied with ourselves and with each other.

Nig began to show signs of anxiety. I read now in his eyes as in a book. He wished to start. I paid my bill and arose; then I started for the road which had brought us up the mountain. I saw that Nig had gone and planted himself squarely at the entrance to another road. He cast upon me a serious look, even severe, but I had made such progress during the two hours that the eloquent silence of the animal had become familiar to me.

"What sort of opinion must you have of me?" said Nig. "Do you think I will travel twice over the same road? No! No! I am too good a guide for

that. I know my business. We will return by another route."

We descended by this other road, which was still prettier than the first. Nig was very lively now, and often turned toward me with a little triumphant air. We recrossed the village to the platform of the station, and were met by three or four dogs who wanted to gossip with my comrade, but Nig growled and refused their advances.

"You see well enough what I have got to do. I must conduct the gentleman to the train." It was only when I was in the waiting-room that he would consent to leave me, after having cracked gayly the last two pieces of sugar, and this is how I translated his parting glance:

"Now we are five minutes ahead of time. It is not I who would let you miss the train. I wish you good-day sir! good-day!"

Here is a tale of the old plantation days by M. E. M. Davis, the author of "In War Times at La Rose Blanche." There is no one who reproduces better the fascinating atmosphere of a Louisiana plantation of forty years ago than this writer.

THE TRADIN'-BOAT.

AN OLD PLANTATION STORY.

Uncle Marcellus Brandon sat in his big arm-chair on one side of the lofty doorway that led into the hall from the veranda, and Tante swung herself softly to and fro in her low rocker on the other.

Uncle Marcellus was a Virginia Brandon. In the dashing and gallant days of his early manhood he had adventured—with a gigantic black body-servant at his elbow and the proceeds of an unusually fine tobacco crop in his pocket—down to New Orleans for the avowed purpose of dancing at one of the then famous *cordon bleu* balls. He had it in mind to scatter broadcast other seeds of that unfenced crop which Fashion at that time permitted the youth of his class to sow openly and aboveboard.

Passing down Rue Bourbon on the way to his first revel, however, he encountered the dark and lustrous eyes of Mademoiselle Elise Joubert. Her pretty head was enveloped in fleecy laces, her white gown was garlanded with roses, her softly rounded cheeks had the velvety whiteness of a magnolia leaf. She was tripping demurely along behind her short fat mamma and her shorter lean papa near the entrance to the old Theatre d'Orleans.

The *cordon bleu*, with its dream of voluptuous octoroon sirens, vanished instantly from his mental vision. He abandoned, like one under a spell, his mocking companions, and elbowed a passage, with a fierceness quite unnecessary, through the good-natured chattering crowd lounging about the *controle*.

The curtain was already up when he entered the fine

old *salle*, and a soft hiss pursued him as he marched with an unconsciously eager and determined step along the narrow aisles. But he heeded this no more than he heeded the faint ripple of amusement that stirred across the high-bred assembly when he stood stock still before the *loge grillée* where she sat, and stared at her with all his heart in his eyes.

The wooing was hasty and impetuous, though the wooer knew not one word of French, and *la belle Louisianaise* had at her command but the merest scrap of (convent) English.

When duly informed of his demand for her hand by her mother—to whom, much to his disgust, Marcellus Brandon found himself obliged first to submit it—Mademoiselle Elise consented meekly and with down-dropped eyelids to be transported to Wheatfield, the Brandon estate, Albemarle County, Virginia; and then with eyes uprolled vowed sweetly that she would at the instant make herself teached *cette belle langue Anglaise.*

But that was when she was Mademoiselle Joubert. When she became Mrs. Marcellus Brandon, she placidly but firmly refused to do either. Uncle Marcellus was fain to transfer himself and his hundred odd "hands" from Wheatfield, Albemarle County, Virginia, to St. Denys, Rapides Parish, Louisiana, which ample plantation was a part of his wife's *dot*, and to begin his life-long struggle with French verbs.

His forehead, knotted by years of this combat, gradually smoothed as Marcellus and Joseph Marie, his twin sons, grew to manhood. French came to them with their mother's milk, as Père Joubert proudly observed, but by the time they were fairly in trousers they learned to twist their soft tongues to English whenever they addressed their father. In the mean time Uncle Marcellus used often to be seen hanging over the garden gate, his face aglow with pleasure as he listened to the familiar Jeems River vernacular of Unk' Billy, an old Brandon retainer. And then there was Bedford, his own solemn old body-servant.

But all that was in the halcyon days "befo' de wah."

Unk' Billy and Bedford had been gathered to the dust these many years; the twins were long ago gone out into the world; and Uncle Marcellus, who was growing old, and had been "Uncle" Marcellus to half the parish for two generations at least, had resigned himself to an unbroken *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Marcellus, who had become "Tante" alike to relatives and friends.

Therefore it was worth something to see the smile on his round face nowadays, when Cecile Joubert, Tante's orphaned niece, who had come to live at St. Denys, entered the breakfast-room with a kiss and "*Bon-jour*" for Tante, and—oh, the dear old English with the quaint little flavor of accent upon it—"*Good-morning*" and a kiss for Uncle Marcellus.

It was Cecile who came along the hall now and stood in the doorway between them. She had, it appeared, brought a shawl for Tante, for the evening was drawing on, and she had fetched Uncle Marcellus his pipe. When she had lighted a taper for the one and wrapped the shawl about the other, she came down the steps and paced back and forth along the shelled walks of her rose-garden, humming a gay little chansonette and glancing now and again toward the gate and up the lane that led to La Ferme aux Ifs, whose distant chimneys showed slender and dark against the face of a great yellow moon slowly rising into view.

Uncle Marcellus remarked to Tante in his painfully acquired and laborious French that Cecile seemed to grow prettier every day. Tante nodded a pleased assent.

Now, truly, Uncle Marcellus had never in all his life loved any woman but Tante. Her eyes, which remained the same large, soft and shining wells of light that had lured him into the Theatre d'Orleans fifty years ago (though her form had broadened to shapelessness and a pronounced mustache shaded her upper lip), had been the only eyes in the whole world for him. Yet somehow, as he sat looking at Cecile, with her tender blue eyes and her rose-tinted cheeks, and her fair wavy hair, his heart stirred strangely within him, and he was

minded of the slim little fourth or fifth cousin who came down to the gate to bid him good-by the day he went away on that first roystering journey to New Orleans, and who, when he looked back, was gazing so wistfully after him. She had the same name too, though at Wheatfield they called her Cis'ly and sometimes Cis. And she had been dead these forty years and more, dear, dear!

The old man coughed, and Tante got up and went over and stood beside him, patting him on the back with affectionate solicitude. Just then the clatter of horses' hoofs sounded in the lane, and presently the gate opened and shut.

"'Tis but Octave," said Tante, re-seating herself, and she smiled significantly. She spoke, as always, in her own soft-syllabled native tongue. "It is thy wish," she went on after a short pause, "that the children shall settle this marriage for themselves, and it is perhaps best for them. Thou and I were not permitted this curious American custom. But then, we had no need of it, eh Mar-rsay*lous!*" No combination of letters can hope to convey an idea of the music of Tante's rare utterance of her husband's name.

Uncle Marcellus smiled back at her through the gathering dusk. He had already forgotten little cousin Cicely Brandon.

Meantime Tante's favorite scheme was not prospering out in the rose-garden, although aided and abetted by Uncle Marcellus' odd American notions of liberty. The "children" had taken a turn or two about the violet-bordered walks, and then Octave had drawn his companion aside to a seat under the old magnolia-tree, whose great white bells were filling all the dewy air with their rich and pungent perfume. "Cecile," he had said, laying his hand upon hers, where it rested on the back of the rustic bench, "I have come—again—for my answer."

"I am sorry, Octave," Cecile had replied gently, "but it is always the same."

"And always the same reason?" Octave had demanded in a slightly bantering tone.

"Yes," she was exclaiming with some heat at the very moment when kindly, shrewd old Tante was congratulating herself that La Ferme aux Ifs (for was not Octave Gaston the sole and only heir of the good bachelor uncle Joseph-Marie Gaston?) and Bord du Bois, Cecile's almost princely inheritance, were at last about to be reunited. "Yes! always the same reason. I will not marry any man who does nothing with himself all the day long and every day but lounge about rose-gardens——"

"*Garden*," corrected Octave, "the St. Denys rose-garden. Be at least just, Cecile."

"And sing—though you sing well, Octave, I admit that——"

"I only warble accompaniments to Cecile Joubert's songs," murmured Octave humbly.

"And fish and smoke cigarettes, and ride about the country with a pack of hounds at his horse's heels! The old times have passed, Octave," she went on earnestly and a trifle dramatically; "a man has no right to be idle like that; no right! He should be standing shoulder to shoulder with the world's workers. He should——"

"But, Cecile," remonstrated Octave lightly, and apparently unimpressed by this very magnificent theory, with which, it is true, he was already tolerably familiar, "the good uncle Joseph-Marie——"

"Oh, the good uncle," she interrupted scornfully, "I'd rather be—*Michel Bares* on the *Tradin'-Boat*, if I were a man, than to be dependent on an uncle, or a father—or a wife!"

A flush rose to the young man's dark cheek, and he sprang hastily to his feet.

"Oh, Octave!" she cried in dismay. She had for a moment forgotten the personal nature of the discussion; as for her own vast fortune, she had a habit of not remembering that at all. "Please forgive me, I did not intend to be so—so rude. But at the American school where I have been, you know, they have such different ideas from——"

"Oh, yes, I know," he growled, with a savage imprecation under his breath addressed to American schools in general, and this particular *pension* where Cecile had imbibed her democratic, not to say communistic opinions.

"Never mind, Cecile," he added, with a sudden return to his ordinary light and airy tone, "I have my answer, true; but we are still friends?"

"Why, of course," she assented, surprised, and, it must be admitted, secretly a little wounded by this ready acquiescence in her decision. Hitherto he had pleaded his suit with passionate warmth, and, after each final and emphatic *No*, he had gone off declaring gayly that he would return again—and again—and again, until he should at last have conquered. Ah well, he had come—and gone—a good many times already, and if he had at last learned wisdom, so much the better for him, she thought as she sat on the steps in the moonlight and listened to his light chat, now in one tongue, now in another, with Uncle Marcellus and Tante. Tante, rocking softly to and fro in her low chair, was happily as yet unaware that Ferme aux Ifs and Bord du Bois, divided more than half a century ago by the perverseness of a foolish young woman, were likely by the perverseness of another to remain asunder.

The next morning M. Paul Joubert's huge old family carriage came lumbering up the lane and stopped with a great flourish at the front steps. Out bundled cousins Laure and Jeanne, bag, baggage, and *bonné*. "For a whole week, Cecile!" they cried, in the midst of the joyous clatter that welcomed them. "And oh, do hurry up with the rose-leaves for Tante's spice-jars, and get dressed. The Tradin'-Boat is at the landing."

An hour or so later the three girls, followed by Valentine, Cecile's high-turbaned, mahogany-colored *bonne*, came fluttering into Tante's morning-room. Their cool-looking white gowns were belted with dainty ribbons about their slim young waists; wide straw hats shaded their fresh young faces.

What did Tante want from the Tradin'-Boat? and

what could they bring Uncle Marcellus? they demanded with many airy gestures and bird-like caresses.

Uncle Marcellus would like some Perique tobacco. Tante's list was a long one, and included spices and pepper, and cotton-thread, and a paper of tacks; some jeans for Angelique's twin pickaninnys; a garden hoe and a watering-pot.

It was a good mile and more down to the river, but a soft breeze came in from the moss-hung swamp at the back of the plantation, and the way lay along the wide pleasant lane that ran between St. Denys and Ferme aux Ifs. The Cherokee-rose hedges on either side were all white with long slim buds and big-petalled blossoms, and the dewy grass fringing the road was odorous with the tiny purple and yellow balls of the sensitive plant.

"Already!" exclaimed Jeanne when they came to the first low vine-hung cabin of the straggling little village under the high levee. Here they encountered an acquaintance. He took off his slouch hat at sight of them and stopped, grinning foolishly.

"Michel Bares," demanded Cecile, severely, "what are you doing on shore?"

Michel Bares, a slight, dark and rather good-looking young fellow, muttered something in the soft Cajan patois about having had a *frisson*, and his *nannan* was going to make him a *tisane* of geranium leaves.

"I do not believe a word you say, Michel," interrupted Cecile; "that is what you said the last time when you stopped off and got drunk and beat your wife, and Captain Larver had to come himself and fetch you back to the boat."

Michel explained that Captain Larver had got a new clerk on board, "h'an for himself he was ti'd h'an wanted to res' awhile."

"You are not telling me the truth, Michel," said his monitress inexorably, "and mind, I shall certainly tell Father Kenyon if you behave as you did the last time."

Michel took his scolding in very good part, and looked after them with a cunning smile as they walked on toward the landing.

The river was low, and they had to pick their way carefully down the steep side of the levee. A noisy crowd, mostly of negroes, stood aside to let them pass, and returned their greeting with loud but respectful salutations.

A wide gang-plank led from the slippery bluff to the Tradin'-Boat. The Tradin'-Boat was a small side-wheel steamboat with a single deck, at the front end of which was constructed a cabin with a low flat roof. This was surmounted by a tiny pilot-house, and served as the floating "store." The snug space behind the cabin was occupied by a rusty engine and a couple of dilapidated pumps. The rear deck contained a smoke-stained tent, behind whose scanty flaps a bed, a cooking stove, and a deal table piled with dishes were more or less visible.

Above the wide doorway which gave entrance into the store, a freshly-painted sign bore on its expansive surface in large letters the legend:

JACKSON TARVER, DEALER IN DRY GOODS, HARDWARE, AND GENERAL MERCHANDISE.

Within, a counter ran along one side; the wall behind it was lined with shelves containing Captain Tarver's miscellaneous assortment of calicos, and cheap woollens, candles, candies, spices, medicines and stationery. On the other side were ranged boxes and barrels, jars, buckets, wash-boards, a plough or two, a second-hand sewing-machine, and other nondescript articles. Overhead, from the squatty ceiling depended hams and pieces of bacon, bunches of trace-chains, whips, cow-bells and yokes; and here and there hung a ready-made dress and a ruffled gingham sun-bonnet.

The dingy little place was thronged with buyers, all waiting their turn to be served, for Captain Tarver's new clerk was busily engaged attending to the wants of old Betty-Rose, one of the St. Denys negroes.

When Cecile and her cousins entered, he was reaching up to one of the highest shelves for a piece of red calico, and they could not see his face. When he turned,

however, a torrent of surprised exclamation burst from Jeanne and Laure. Michel Bares' successor was Octave Gaston. He was in his shirt-sleeves, and his dark curls were tossed in unwonted confusion about his white forehead, but he looked undeniably dignified and handsome in his new rôle. He shook hands composedly across the counter with them all.

"Yes," he said, with easy grace, in answer to Laure's amazed questioning, "I have taken Michel Bares' place. How many yards did you say, Aunt Betty-Rose?"

"Lawed-a-mussy, neb' min' *me*, Marse Octave!" said Aunt Betty-Rose, hurriedly, backing away from the counter. "Jes' wait on Miss Cecile. Well den, if yer don' *wan'* nuttin', Miss Cecile, honey, do' I *is* pow'ful shame ter hav' Marse Octave waitin' on er ole nigger lak ez ef he wuz po' white trash—eight yards er dat tu'ky-red, Marse Octave."

"Michel Bares' place," continued Octave placidly, measuring off the gaudy stuff with deft and graceful fingers; "true, it is not a very lucrative position—what else, Aunt Betty-Rose? Oh, apples,—" he dived under the counter and reappeared with a scoop full of dried apples, which he placed upon the fly-specked scales—"you see, Laura, I have grown tired of being idle. I have made up my mind to stand alone" (he glanced furtively at Cecile's compressed lips and angry eyes and stumbled a little in his speech)—"I mean I am going to try and make my own living."

"But, Octave," began Laura.

"I took the first thing that offered," he went on gravely, "really a fortunate thing for me,—Michel's *frisson*. Bacon, Aunt Betty-Rose? how much?"

He came around the counter and dexterously unhooked a piece of bacon from the ceiling, "five pounds, eh?—That was better than being idle"—he was weighing the greasy stuff now, and wrapping it in a piece of brown paper.

Cecile up to this moment had not spoken. She had been standing apart, now pale with scorn, now red with some feeling she dared not define, her blazing eyes fol-

lowing Octave's movements. Suddenly her face softened; a half pleading, half imperious light came into her eyes; she took a step forward, and her lips opened as if to speak. Just then, however, a little door in the rear of the cabin opened and a girl came in. She was about Cecile's own age; she had a pretty round face dusted with brown freckles and lighted by a pair of wide-open, gray eyes. A mass of yellow curls nestled against her neck and crowned her forehead, the sleeves of her blue cotton gown were rolled up to the elbow, displaying a pair of white well-rounded arms. She came forward smiling and smoothing her check apron with plump, floury hands.

"Mister Gaston," she said in a soft, drawling voice, "Captain Traver, he says fer yer ter come in ter the tent ter dinner. I'll 'ten' the sto' tell you're done eatin'."

"Dinner?" said Octave, staring at her a moment in bewilderment, while a vision rose before him of the round table at Ferme aux Ifs, with its array of crystal and silver; Uncle Joseph-Marie at one end and sipping his claret and denouncing the new-fangled boiling-kettles; himself at the other, and the open windows with the sunset streaming in; and away over the tops of the trees the steep roof of St. Denys, where Cecile——

"Dinner! Oh, certainly," he cried, coming suddenly to himself. And he smiled down into the pretty face lifted to his, "as soon as I shall have served these ladies——"

But the ladies were gone. Cecile was flying across the gangway and up the steep levee, with an angry spot on either cheek and a dangerous fire in her blue eyes.

Michel Bares, who stood in the narrow pathway at the top of the levee, beat a rapid retreat at sight of her, dodging into his little cabin, where he betook himself to bed and shook with a real *frisson* until she was well along the rose-bordered lane.

But Cecile had not even seen him. She sped on blind and speechless, followed by her protesting, wondering cousins and the grumbling old *bonne*.

"What in the world does it mean, Cecile?" cried Laura, at last catching up with her and laying a hand on her arm. "And isn't it too funny!"

"I don't know what it means," replied Cecile hotly, "and I think it is perfectly disgusting."

It was hard enough to bear the persistent questions and the amazed comment of Tante and Uncle Marcellus; and the knowing silence of Laure and Jeanne. But in the evening, when Mr. Joseph Marie Gaston, the small, dark, shrivelled, choleric old Frenchman, and life-long friend and neighbor, came over to scold and gesticulate and groan, and to launch scarcely-veiled reproaches at herself, poor Cecile was angry indeed and very wretched.

"The Tradin'-Boat has gone on to the next landing, six or seven miles down the river, and Octave has gone with it, sir! I commanded, I even begged him, to come home, but he swore he would not. And who is going to keep my accounts and look after the place?" wailed the good uncle. "There never was such a head as Octave's for business. These three years he has managed everything. And now that these new-fangled boilers——"

But nothing of this last plaint reached Cecile's ears. She had stolen silently up to her own room at the mention of the departure of the Tradin'-Boat. She did not care—of course she did not care—where he went or what he did! she said to herself fiercely; why, indeed, should *she* be held responsible for the foolish escapades of Octave Gaston! Perhaps, after all—and here a little chilly sensation crept over her as a vision of a pretty, plump girl in a blue calico gown arose unbidden to her mind, and she remembered, with a start, the smile in Octave's eyes when he looked down on that fair freckled face! At this point, like many another heroine before her, she sat down on the edge of her bed and cried; and then stood up, wrathfully brushing the tears from her eyes.

She tossed feverishly from side to side in her white little bed for a long time, and thought she would never get to sleep. But sleep is very friendly to all young

creatures, and long before midnight the soft fringed lids had closed over the slightly reddened eyes, and she was dreaming that Octave was wrapping a bit of bacon in that long-coveted white China-crape shawl in Tante's big amoise. When——

Did anything happen? She found herself standing in the middle of the room, shaking from head to foot. The white moonlight streamed in through the window across her little bare feet, and the wind fluttered the folds of her snowy night-dress. What was it? Her heart was beating violently, and she could hardly restrain an outcry. But the house was perfectly still, and in the honeysuckle vines outside the window a mocking bird was trilling softly.

After a time she crept back to bed, with her rosary on her wrist, and lay there, still trembling, and counting her beads. A long time after—she never could tell how long—there was a sudden tumult out in the lane, a rush up the avenue, a banging of doors, hurried steps about the halls, voices in excited interrogations and exclamations. She sprang up again, as Laure burst into the room followed by Jeanne, who shrieked, "Cecile, Cecile, the Tradin'-Boat has blown up and Octave is killed!"

"Oh, Jeanne, how thoughtless of you!" cried Laure reproachfully as they bent together to lift a little white senseless heap from the floor. For Cecile had fainted. But it was only for a moment, and she presently begged them to leave her. She would rather be alone, she said.

She listened quietly when another messenger came in to tell how Octave had been seen perfectly safe, or at all events alive, after the explosion, and how he had afterward lost his life endeavoring to rescue a young woman who was employed on the boat. From her window she saw Uncle Marcellus, in the soft mellow moonlight, swing himself into the saddle, with many puffs and groans—for it had been twenty years since he had mounted a horse—and ride away. A little later she felt, rather than heard, Mr. Joseph-Marie gallop down

the lane from Ferme aux Ifs. And then the hours wore silently away; the yellow moonlight faded; the gray dawn came creeping on. Will she ever forget, I wonder, how she felt as she stood before her mirror in the wan uncertain morning fastening one of Laure's black dresses about her throat, for she hated the sight of black, poor child, and had none in her wardrobe; and smoothing straight the rebellious little curls that wanted to frolic as usual on her forehead? It was a white, drawn face which looked back at her out of the mirror, a face from which all the beauty and brightness had suddenly fled.

And then she went slowly down the wide stairway, and across the veranda, and down to the rose-garden gate, where all the household was anxiously awaiting Uncle Marcellus' return. They took her silently among them as she approached. Even Tante, who yearned so over her, found no words to offer to her strange dry-eyed sorrow.

All at once there was a noise, and a dust, and a skurry in the lane, and there was Uncle Marcellus dismounting from his horse with wonderful spryness, and turning his cheerful red face toward them and shouting:

"It's all a d—n lie! *lie!* He's no more dead than I am! The boat was blown up, my love," he added in French to Tante, who could not help showing, however, that she had perfectly understood his initial remark; "the boat was blown up, but Octave was not hurt by the explosion, or by his dive in the river after the girl."

There was no time for further explanation, for here was Octave himself galloping up to the gate and flinging himself from his horse. He wore Michel Bares' Sunday suit of blue flannel, and his wide cajan hat, and he looked remarkably bright and handsome as he came smiling toward the excited group. And then——

A limp, black-clad figure lay helpless and sobbing in his arms!

Tante's fine tact was proverbial. But on this occasion no tact was needed to sweep all the spectators, black and white, into the house or behind it! Even the wide-

eyed, copper-colored pickaninny twins, Joseph-Marie and Marcellus, so named in honor of the twin sons of the house, scuttled silently after their mother and disappeared without even so much as a backward glance. So that by the time Octave had half-led, half-carried Cecile to the bench under the magnolia, and thrown himself on his knees before her, holding her hands in his, the rose-garden, over which the first long level rays of the morning sun were beginning to stretch, was as still and deserted as a lover's tryst.

"For me! This for me! Oh, my dear, my dear!" he cried, with a sob in his voice, lifting a fold of her black dress and kissing it reverently.

"Oh, I thought——" she began, and stopped choked with tears.

"But imagine, my love," he said presently, when they had grown calmer and he sat beside her with his arm about her still trembling form, "there was really no danger. I went up in the air a little way, it is true, and came down in the water; and then I saw her close by struggling, poor child——"

She drew away ever so slightly, but he went on.

"Old Jackson Tarver's young wife, you know—you saw her yesterday on the Tradin'-Boat, didn't you? and so I brought her ashore with me, neither of us the worse for a little wetting. How those blundering idiots could have brought up such a piece of news I can't conceive. But then," he added with a smile, "I, at least, ought not to complain."

"Do you know, Cecile," he went on more gravely, "that I am horribly afraid that it is I who am responsible for the explosion! I was very tired after measuring calico and weighing sugar and bacon all day——"

"Poor boy," she murmured sympathetically.

"And when I sat down to smoke and to dream of Somebody's rose-garden and Somebody, perhaps even then, walking there, I lighted my cigarette and tossed the match over among the kegs and boxes; and the next thing I knew the roof was open and I was going skyward."

"Oh, Octave, Octave!" and she nestled against him, shivering again at the mere thought of his past danger.

"Uncle Joseph-Marie is down at the landing now settling up with Jackson Tarver, who will no doubt in the end gain by the damage done to the Tradin'-Boat—and, by Jove, I had quite forgot the thirty dollars I owe Michel Bares for lending me his place for a month! But I am going to be more careful next time, Cecile. I mean to go away and find something to do—now that I know that you love me—something in real earnest."

She clung to him hysterically. "Never," she cried, "you are never to leave me again, Octave. Oh, how can you talk so cruelly? Is not my fortune enough for us? And even if that should fail, is there not always the good uncle, Joseph-Marie?"

There is nothing like practice and experience for upsetting theories; as is conclusively proved in the following dainty sketch by Anatole France, translated for ROMANCE by Mary J. Safford.

JESSY.

THERE lived in London, during the reign of Elizabeth, a scholar named Bog, who was famed, under the appellation of Bogus, for an essay on "Human Errors," which nobody had ever seen.

Bogus, though he had toiled at his work for twenty years, had not yet published any portion of it, but his manuscript, neatly copied and arranged on shelves in the recess of a window, contained material for no less than ten folio volumes. The first treated of the error of being born, the root of all the others. The following ones related to the mistakes of little boys and girls, youths, men of mature age, and graybeards, and those of persons belonging to the various professions, statesmen, shop-keepers, soldiers, cooks, publicists, etc. The last volumes, which were still unfinished, dealt with the errors of the republic, which result from the sum total of individual and professional blunders. And such was the connection of ideas in this noble work that not a single page could be omitted without destroying all the rest. The demonstrations rested upon one another and the last clearly proved that evil is the essence of life, and that, if life is a quantity, it may be affirmed, with mathematical precision, that there is precisely the same amount of evil as of life in the world.

Bogus had not made the mistake of marrying. He lived alone in his cottage with an old housekeeper, named Kat, that is, Catharine, and whom he called Clausentina because she came from Southampton.

The philosopher's sister, whose mind was less transcendental, heaping error on error, had loved a dry-goods dealer, married him, and given birth to a little daughter, named Jessy.

Her final blunder had been to die, after ten years of wedded life, thus causing the death of her husband, who could not survive her loss. Bogus took the orphan home, partly from pity, partly from the hope that she would furnish him a good example of childish errors.

She was then six years old. During the first week she spent with him she did nothing but weep. On the morning of the first day after that, she said:

"I saw mamma. She was dressed all in white, and had flowers in the folds of her gown. She scattered them over my bed, but I couldn't find them this morning. Give me mamma's flowers."

Bog noted this error, but remarked, in his comment, that it was an innocent and even pleasant one.

Some time after, Jessy said to him:

"Uncle Bog, you are old and ugly, but I love you dearly, and you must love me."

Bog took up his pen, but acknowledging, after some mental conflict, that he no longer had a youthful appearance and that he had never been very handsome, did not note down the child's words. He merely said:

"Why must I love you, Jessy?"

"Because I'm little."

"Is it true," Bog asked himself, "is it true that children ought to be loved? Perhaps it may be, for they are certainly in great need of it. That would excuse the common error of mothers who give their little children their nursing and their love. That chapter in my treatise must be revised."

On the morning of his birthday, coming into the room where he kept his books and papers, and which he called his book-store, he perceived a delicious fragrance and saw a pot of carnations on the window-sill. There were only three blossoms, but they were bright scarlet ones, on which the sun shone radiantly. Everything in the learned room looked cheerful—the old armchair, the black walnut table, the backs of the ancient tomes in their fawn-skin parchment, and hog-skin bindings. Bogus, who was as dry as they, began to follow their example. Jessy, hugging him affectionately, cried:

"Look, look, Uncle Bog. That's heaven." (She pointed through the leaden-cased panes at the light blue of the air.) "That is the earth, the blooming earth." (She pointed to the pot of carnations.) "Then down below, where the big black books are, is hell."

The big black books were the ten volumes of the *Treatise on Human Errors*, ranged in a row under the window. This mistake reminded the scholar of his great work, which he had neglected for some time, to walk about the streets and parks with his niece. The child discovered a thousand interesting things and showed them to Bogus, who had spent little of his life out-of-doors. He opened his manuscripts again, but no longer recognized work which he had done when he had neither flowers nor Jessy. Fortunately, philosophy came to his aid by suggesting the transcendent idea that Jessy was not wholly useless. He put more and more faith in the belief that she was necessary to the economy of his work.

One day, while reflecting upon this subject, he found her threading a needle before the window where the pot of carnations stood, and asked what she was going to sew.

Jessy answered:

"Don't you know that the swallows have gone, Uncle Bog?"

Bogus knew nothing about it, as the fact was mentioned neither by Pliny nor Avicenna.

Jessy added:

"Kat told me yesterday."

"Kat?" cried Bogus, "the child is talking about the worthy Clausentina."

"Kat told me yesterday: 'The swallows have gone earlier than usual this year; that means an early and severe winter.' That's what Kat said. And then I saw mamma in her white dress, with a halo round her hair, only she had no flowers like those she wore the other time. She said: 'Jessy, you must take Uncle Bog's fur-lined great-coat out of the trunk and mend it, if it needs repairing.' I woke, and as soon as I got up, I

took the overcoat out of the trunk, and as there are rips in several places, I'm going to sew it."

Winter came and fulfilled the swallows' predictions. Bogus, in his great-coat, with his feet close to the fire, was trying to revise certain chapters in his *Treatise.* But whenever he succeeded in reconciling his new experiences with the theory of universal evil, Jessy upset his ideas by bringing in a mug of nice ale or merely letting him see her eyes and smile.

When summer came, uncle and niece took long walks in the fields, where Jessy collected plants which he named and she arranged in the evenings according to their properties. During these excursions, she showed a keen intelligence and a charming disposition. One evening, while she was spreading on the table the plants which they had gathered during the day, she said to Bogus:

"Now, Uncle Bog, I know by name all the plants which you have showed me. Here are the ones which cure and those which relieve. I want to keep them, so that I can always recognize and describe them to others. I need a big book to dry them in."

"Take that one," said Bog.

And he pointed to the first volume of the *Treatise on Human Errors.*

When it had a plant on every page, the next one was taken, and in three summers the scholar's masterpiece was converted into a herbarium.

One can never be quite patient with these enterprising story-writers who describe the most wonderful effects from certain prescriptions, but fail to name their component parts. Mr. Charles E. Hoag, who has written for ROMANCE the following ingenious tale, is guilty of this fault, but his readers will forgive him for the sake of the entertainment which he affords them.

A DUEL IN THE DARK.

Up to the time when occurred the incident which I am about to relate, I had been what is called an unlucky fellow, having an unfortunate propensity for stroking the wrong way and unwittingly bringing down upon myself the ill will of the people with whom I came in contact. A friend once tried to explain this misfortune of mine on the theory that the electric fluid with which I was charged was of the antagonistic order, and that I was in no way responsible for the enemies that I made.

At this time I was in Paris, having been sent there by my friends, who were then making an effort to procure for me a position of some importance. In view of my fatal incapacity for doing or saying the right thing at the right time, they deemed it indispensable to my success that I should be at a safe distance until the matter was decided.

That I should choose Paris for my place of retirement was but natural, since a young lady in whom I felt a somewhat absorbing interest was at the time stopping in that city.

I had become acquainted with her in my college days, and was sure that she, at least, felt no antipathy to me. Her father, who was a retired army officer, took a very decided dislike to me, at sight, and gave as a reason that I had "no fight" in me. The arrogant manner in which he treated me in those days left no room for doubt that he considered me a coward.

Shortly after my arrival, I met the young lady by an appointment which was clandestine only so far as that

I was aware of her father's absence from the city on that day. It was evening when, somewhat fatigued by our sight-seeing, we entered a café on one of the Boulevards for lunch.

As we passed through the broad entrance, we encountered two men who were lounging against one of the pillars. The larger and much the stronger of the two was carelessly brushing the floor with his cane. Just as we reached him, he, if not intentionally, yet with an indifference to the rights of others that was inexcusable, switched the stick against us in such a way as to tear a part of the lady's lace dress. I was indignant, and a glance at her flushed face made me feel that I must do something to show my resentment. This feeling was strengthened when I observed the indifference which the fellow displayed in regard to the affair. He made no attempt to apologize, and when I remarked: "You were very careless, sir!" he gave me an insolent stare that angered me beyond control, and forgetting, for the moment, everything else, I spoke to him sharply. He made no reply, but, extending his cane, entangled it in the lady's dress, so that the delicate fabric was again torn for a yard or more.

The man with him, a much younger person, started as if to check him, but the movement was not decided enough to make it quite clear what his intentions were.

I was frantic with passion, and with one blow struck the fellow to the floor, then hurried my companion away from the scene. The expression of surprise upon the faces of the bystanders did not escape me, and I realized intuitively that I had dared to assail a man of more than ordinary importance.

We were hardly seated when the younger man came to me, and bowing said, "I beg Monsieur's pardon but my friend, whom Monsieur felt called upon to rebuke, wishes to exchange cards."

He held toward me an ordinary visiting card, which I took without glancing at it, and handed him one of my own. Courteously thanking me for the favor, and again begging my pardon, he withdrew.

"Oh, how thankful I am that you knocked that brute down!" exclaimed my companion; "how I wish that papa could have seen you. I will tell him of it, and he will never—no, never—again call you a——"

She suddenly checked herself, and did not finish the sentence, but I knew well enough what she would have added: her father would never again call me a *coward*.

It did not trouble me then; I felt very brave and smiled down upon her sparkling eyes with a "that-is-an-every-day-sort-of-experience-with-me" expression.

After lunch I escorted her to her home, then returned to my hotel, and very soon retired.

I had not finished dressing next morning when the door of my room was suddenly opened, and a man entered unannounced and apparently in great excitement. I was not surprised at this abruptness when I saw that it was my eccentric friend, Wilson, whom I had found living in the city.

Without a word of greeting or apology, he exclaimed, "Well, you have done it! I congratulate you upon your notoriety. I came early and have not stopped for ceremony, because I wished to be the first to pay homage to the latest Parisian hero."

I stared blankly at him, vainly trying to comprehend what he was driving at, but supposing that this was only another exhibition of his whimsical character.

"Did you know who he was when you struck him?" he continued.

"Know whom?" I queried.

"Why, the man you struck last night, of course."

"I do not know nor do I care," I replied indifferently, but wondering how Wilson had heard of the affair.

"Well, it was no less a personage than Monsieur Le Baron, the noted duellist."

"What! not the man who, it is said, has killed his dozen?" I questioned, no longer indifferent.

"The same. The morning papers are full of the affair."

I explained the circumstances.

"Le Baron had evidently been drinking too much," pondered Wilson.

"What will be the result?" I anxiously inquired.

"Duel," was the laconic answer.

I could not suppress a feeling of faintness when it flashed upon me what would be the result. A duel with Monsieur Le Baron meant almost certain death; a refusal to accept a challenge would ostracize me from society, and, more than all else, would lose me, forever, the love of the one being above all others whose affection I most wished to obtain. I knew the young lady and her father too well to suppose that they would look upon me again, if I in any way showed the white feather. The matter was taking on a decidedly unpleasant aspect. I looked at Wilson; he was busy stabbing a fly which was crawling along the floor, minus a wing.

"Do you think he will challenge me?" I inquired nervously.

"Challenge you!" he repeated contemptuously. "Challenge you! Why, it is proverbial that Le Baron would rather fight a duel than eat. Challenge you? why, of course he will, and I came here this morning expressly to offer myself as your second. Of course your position as principal in this business is more glorious, but then it is more dangerous. Shall I meet the messenger when he comes and make the necessary arrangements?"

"Certainly," said I, "and thank you, but I trust the matter is not so serious as you make it appear."

"Oh, it will come out all right if you will follow my directions implicitly, but you may be very sure the challenge will be sent this morning. Remember you are to leave the whole thing to me."

We were still talking over the affair when a card was brought me, upon which I read the name of Adolphe Boscher, Captain 33d Cuirassiers.

"He is Le Baron's second," declared Wilson, as I read the name; "let him come up."

The captain on presenting himself expressed much

regret at being called upon to perform "an unpleasant duty," but was interrupted by Wilson, who explained to him that his visit was not unexpected, and that he himself had been requested to act for me. He suggested that they immediately depart to make the customary arrangements, to which Captain Boscher assented with more apologies.

Left to myself, I began pacing up and down the room, anxiously reviewing the situation. To refuse to fight this man was out of the question; life, I felt sure, would not be worth living without the woman I loved, and if I declined the challenge, I should never be allowed to look upon her face again. On the other hand, to meet Le Baron was, in all probability, to meet my death. A cold shudder crept over me at the thought. That was the only thing to do, however—to meet the fellow and let him kill me. I should then at least have the satisfaction of knowing that my beloved one would honor my memory.

The hours passed as only the hours can pass to a man who believes that he has but a short time to live. About noon I received a note from Colonel Russell, the father of my dear girl, in which, in his brusque way, he informed me of his knowledge of what had occurred, and expressed the hope that I would meet the scoundrel and kill him. If I did, he would like to see me afterward.

In the afternoon, Wilson returned with the announcement that all the arrangements had been made.

"It is to occur to-night," he said.

"To-night," I repeated; "why such haste?"

"Oh, to get it off your mind; and we have selected swords."

"Swords!" I echoed. "I know no more about handling a sword than a child! You must have known that Le Baron is credited with being the most expert swordsman on the continent. I should think you might at least have chosen pistols; that would have given him advantage enough, Heaven knows, but swords—I don't know the first rudiments of swordsmanship. It is murder, cold-blooded murder, and you are an accessory!"

"Pooh! it is all right, if you don't so entirely lose your head as to be unable to follow my instructions."

"Where is this assassination to take place?" I inquired, paying no heed to his remark.

"In the cellar of a deserted building just outside the city, and we must get ready at once, for it is booked for 10 o'clock, and we have some distance to ride. You make your preparations, while I run over to my lodgings and get some articles which we shall need."

He left me, and I attempted to get ready. First, I sat down and wrote, or attempted to write, several letters. In my nervous excitement, I could only dash off incoherent and broken sentences, which told nothing save my overwrought emotions. I did not realize this at the time, did not realize anything but that I was to be killed without even a chance to defend myself, for a sword in my hand was as useless against my opponent as a cannon would have been.

On Wilson's return we immediately proceeded to the carriage which he had in waiting, and entered upon our journey. I felt as if riding to my own funeral. On the way Wilson commenced: "The duel is to be in the dark, without any light whatever——"

I interrupted him angrily: "In Heaven's name, Wilson, what is your purpose? Why, I will not go! I will not——"

"Oh, stop!" he put in. "Show a little manhood. Pull yourself up, and hear me through. The duel, as I was saying, is to be conducted in a dark room; they objected to this when I first proposed it, but on my naming swords as the weapons, they consented. You and Le Baron are to be locked up in a room without any light, and remain there until one or the other is killed or disabled, or begs for quarter. And now for my directions to you: just before you go in I will hand you a glass of wine which you must drink and, without stopping an instant, enter the room selected for the combat. Don't delay one moment after drinking the wine, or it will be bad for you. Do as I say, and you will be the victor. Ask no questions, but do as I direct."

I did not half-comprehend him, but caught at the assurance that he understood what he was doing, and I felt a slight hope that he could and would find some way out of the difficulty.

Some miles from the city we turned into a private way which led to a deserted chateau.

Monsieur Le Baron, Captain Boscher, and the surgeon were already on the spot. With the slightest recognition of one another we descended to the basement, carrying but one lantern to illumine the way.

The room in which the duel was to take place was about ten feet square, without windows and with but one door. It was very high and the walls were built of split stones. I looked eagerly about, but could see no chance for outside aid to reach me. I should have been mortally nervous had not the lofty and supercilious air of Le Baron roused my anger.

The final arrangements were quickly made, and we each took a corner, sword in hand. The conditions were briefly re-stated, that there might be no misunderstanding—we were to remain each in his corner until the door was shut, when, after waiting one minute, the signal would be given, and we should be at liberty to slash each other as much as we could, the fight to continue until one or the other was unable to carry it further.

My corner was farthest from the entrance, and opposite it.

After the seconds had left the room, taking the light with them, Wilson, on some pretext or other, returned and handed me a small flask. Then turning me about so that my back was toward the open door through which the light was streaming, he whispered:

"Drink this, but do not turn until I go out and shut the door, and after the duel is ended, before the door is opened, close your eyes tightly and keep them closed until I come to you and bandage them. Say that they are hurt. Your life depends upon following my directions."

Before I could reply or question, he left me and the door was shut. The liquor I had swallowed seemed to

course through my veins like lightning; my head felt strange, and my eyeballs began to prickle. I turned and was surprised to see what an immense volume of light poured through the small keyhole. As I looked, it increased until the room was so light that I could distinctly see every part of it. I glanced at my antagonist, and beheld him so plainly as almost to be able to distinguish his features. He was adjusting something inside his shirt front. I was about to call attention to the breach of the condition that the room should be in total darkness, when the signal was given to make ready.

Le Baron grasped his sword and leaned forward as if he were endeavoring in the dim light to make out something in front of him. At the second signal, he stepped heavily forward, but surprised me by quickly springing to one side and then moving stealthily toward the centre of the room. I could not understand his tactics and did not move. He swung his sword fiercely with a downward sweep, then to the right and left and all around him, acting like a blind man sticking at an invisible enemy.

Again he moved in my direction, going through the same performance, and this he repeated several times, until he came so near me that for safety I moved to one side.

"Where are you?" he grumbled, swinging his blade around.

"Here," I replied, and as he moved in my direction, brandishing the sword, I stepped aside again, but he kept on in the direction of my voice. For a moment he stood still, swaying the weapon like one who depends solely upon his sense of touch. I was so near him and the opportunity was so tempting, I gave a lunge at him. He made no attempt to ward off the attack, and my sword touched him. Then he turned quickly, slashing the air in a circle but making no motion toward me.

It dawned upon me then that he could not see as I could, and I was not long in taking advantage of this. I could easily keep out of his reach, while he was com-

pletely at my mercy. I compromised with myself on the advantage I apparently had over him, and did not attempt to kill him, but I most cruelly disfigured his face, cutting it until I feared he might die from loss of blood.

It could not have been half-an-hour when I saw that he was growing weak, and I ended the farce by knocking him senseless to the floor. Then, closing my eyes and holding my hands over them, I called for help. Wilson, the captain, and the surgeon came running in.

My friend hastened to me, saying, "Your eyes are hurt? Here, let me put this handkerchief over them, while Monsieur the surgeon attends to Le Baron."

He deftly placed a thick bandage over my eyes and, refusing the proffered aid of the physician, he led me upstairs and to the carriage which was to convey us back to the city and my hotel. Le Baron, I afterward learned, was badly "cut up," both physically and mentally, but none of his wounds were dangerous.

On the way home, when I asked for an explanation, Wilson said:

"Well, you know I have made chemistry an absorbing study. Once, while compounding digitalis with some chemicals, I tried its effect upon a dog and discovered that he could see in the darkest room, running with perfect ease while I had to grope my way along. On bringing him to the light too suddenly afterward, I sacrificed his eyesight to my curiosity, for he was thenceforth almost totally blind. Only after several trials did I sufficiently understand the workings of this compound not to injure the animal experimented on.

"Except myself I have never tried it on any human being until to-night. It is a secret that I am not ready to give to the world. You must remain in your room to-night, and to-morrow you can have but little light. I will be with you."

The morning papers gave a full account of the defeat of the great duellist, Le Baron, and highly praised the courage and skill of his American opponent.

During the day Colonel Russell called, but learning

that I could not see him, left congratulations and told Wilson that he hoped I would call on him as soon as I was able to be out, as both his daughter and himself were very anxious to see me. I called that evening, and learned that I had won the admiration of the father, as I had the love of the daughter.

In a short time I received a cablegram from my friends at home, telling me that the country had heard of my fight, and every one was wild over my valor. My position was sure.

I returned to my home with a lovely wife, and a most flattering reputation for courage, all obtained by vanquishing a bully with the aid of an "eye-opener."

"Mr. Robert Van Austen" is not a lofty model to hold up to our young men, but the brilliant and epigrammatic style in which Mrs. Alice Wellington Rollins tells of his interesting and unique career invests it with the charm of a fresh study in ethnology.

THE MAN WHO WAS NOT.

"DOBBS," said Van Austen, glancing at the little door-plate of an apartment on the seventh floor. "Yes, this is my floor."

"But why yours, when the name is Dobbs?" I asked.

"Why, you see, I am the man who is not Dobbs. There are two of us on each story. When I came, I was pondering sadly on the necessity of a doorplate in so large an apartment house, when it suddenly occurred to me that, as Dobbs had one, there was no need of my having one. The elevator would leave my friends at the right story, and then seeing that the name on this door was Dobbs, they would know, of course, that the only other door was mine. Simply not being Dobbs saved me the expense of a doorplate. See?"

Van Austen had been the first friend I had stumbled upon after landing from the Etruria. He had asked me to come down home with him, not to dine, for he made no secret of the fact that he never dined; but to have a glass of beer in a Van Austen cut-glass beer-mug. We had wended our way up-town to a shabby apartment-house in a shabby street, and as we entered the elevator, Van Austen had said mysteriously to the boy, "Up," which I found meant that we were to be taken to the roof. As we stepped out, Van Austen explained:

"I have no view from my rooms, you see; so when I have visitors that I wish to impress, I always bring them up here first. Not that there is much of a view here, so far as scenery goes; it is all roof-tops and chimneys. But there is so much of it, that it has a certain dignity of its own. Queer, isn't it, that a great deal of anything

is picturesque in its way? I hate a sunflower; could not endure even an embroidered one, unless it were conventionalized out of all resemblance to its proper self; but I have never in all my life seen anything in the floral way so magnificent as the great acres at the West, with millions upon millions of the blossoms, perfectly gorgeous in such a mass. It is something like my life, you know; there is so much of nothing, that the whole effect of it is not undignified. Shall we walk down? It isn't far. I find it true that there is always room at the top, for people who can't afford the grander apartments on the lower floors. So I am living on the seventh."

And talking busily as we walked down the stairs, we had both forgotten to notice how many flights of stairs we had descended, till Van Austen glanced at the little doorplate on the story where it suddenly occurred to us to take our bearings, with the result mentioned.

We crossed the little hall to the opposite door, which Van Austen opened with a latch-key. Familiar as I was with the man's ways, I was not surprised at the sudden transformation of the scene. The street had been shabby, the apartment house was shabby, and the apartment evidently consisted of dull, little, ugly rooms, in themselves extremely shabby; but they were crowded with the beautiful Van Austen "things," till they gleamed like a vision of loveliness. A tiny dining-room opened almost at the door, and into this we naturally stepped, after leaving our hats in the hall.

"Of course, I don't dine here," said Van Austen, with the ready frankness that was one of his peculiarities. "I can't afford to keep a *ménage*. My dining-room is like Europe: you know Emerson says that a man finds in Europe only what he brings there, and I find in my dining-room only what I bring to it. To-night it is peaches," and he deposited a small brown paper bag on the beautiful mahogany table, "peaches and beer. That is really a horrible combination. Suppose we postpone the peaches till after, and content ourselves with beer for the moment. Beer in one of Grandmother Van Austen's cut-glass mugs; it is something like my

life, Thorndike; very small beer in very choice cut-glass. The cut-glass has never been able to improve the quality of the beer, but then on the other hand, the beer has never been able to spoil the quality of the cut-glass. It is something, Thorndike, don't you think, to live the life I have to without being embittered by it?"

The very words would have been bitter in the mouth of almost any other man; but Van Austen spoke with the perfect serenity, the patient, calm acceptance of unavoidable fact, which was his distinguishing trait.

"My appointments are quite perfect, you see," as he noted my evident admiration of the soft rug, the polished furniture, the rare jugs, *plaques*, pictures, *portières*, cabinets, and china, that filled every available spot in the little room. "And none of them has cost me a cent. All presents. Rent is the one thing which my friends do not dare to offer me, and which I really think even I might not be willing to accept. I drew the line at rent. I allow no one to present me with a $50,000 house, and my own friends will not permit me to live in a finer street than this. But as to everything else—well, I need not explain. You have known me long enough to know that my besetting sin has always been a lack of proper pride. Fate denied me everything of the kind, I was born with the taste to crave, and ill-health made it impossible for me to struggle for what I want, without sacrificing my life in the contest. I don't want to sacrifice my life; I prefer not to struggle. I accept the situation, and I also accept its alleviations. If any fellow wants to give me anything, he is welcome to do so. I make no secret of the fact that I can make no return, but I am not too proud to accept what I can't get for myself. I should never have been one of those heroic fools—heroic fools expresses what I mean better than foolish heroes even—who starve themselves, like poor Brainard, to go through college. In the first place, I should not have tried to go through college; and in the second place, if I had, and found myself suddenly hard up, I should have gone straight to Lombard, and said, 'Lombard, I'm hungry; can you

give me a bite?' and Lombard would have given me a bite, and I should have gone on better with my studies, and graduated honorably, and not have dampened the whole pleasure of the fellows' class day by dying of starvation under their very eyes without telling of it. I am not a hero, Thorndike; but I'm a beautiful and much-needed illustration of the graceful recipient. Accept nothing you can get for yourself; return everything you possibly can; but if a better fellow is willing to give you what you can't manage to get for yourself, or what he knows you cannot possibly return, take it. How do you suppose,"—and he threw his head back with one of the sunny laughs I remembered so well in college—"how do you suppose I ever happened to get hold of dear old Grandmother Van Austen's cut-glass and china? Everybody thought she would leave it all to Dick's son; but behold, she willed it all to me, just because I was *not* Dick's son! Dick's son would have everything he wanted, she explained, and I apparently should not have by rights anything I wanted; so I should have her china. Dear old lady! well, I shall will it all to Dick's son's son. But come into the parlor."

"Emily's gift last Christmas," he explained, as he pushed aside a rich crimson *portière*. "You see, the rooms on this north side were meant for poor artists. They wanted light from the top, so the windows are just below the ceiling. It suited me perfectly. I could not afford to live in a prettier street, and it would be torture to me to have to look out into this one. Nobody can reach my windows, you will observe, without a chair, and I am careful never to offer the chair."

"I am no stronger, Thorndike," he added, with his faint smile, as, after drawing up a luxurious arm-chair for me, he threw himself at full length on a broad sofa with many cushions. "But sometimes I wonder whether you strong fellows ever really know the luxury of fatigue. I hate to be tired and have to get up; but I love to be tired when I am perfectly at leisure to lie down. I have thrown myself down here many a time when the pure sense of exhaustion, with such a

comfortable spot to give way to it in, seemed to me a kind of exquisite pain. You don't know what I mean? No, I suppose not. Translated into plain English, it simply means that I am awfully glad to get down here just at the present moment. The peaches were heavy."

As I looked at the poor, pale, refined face, brought into such relief against the deep-colored cushions, I believed I could see that Van Austen had failed, was failing. The frank confession of weakness carried me back to our college days, when Van Austen, even at the age when such confession is most trying, never failed to throw himself on any sofa that came to hand, for even five minutes of the rest so essential to his poor, frail body. The victim of some accident in his childhood, he was hopelessly, helplessly, delicate; never ill, but never well; conscious that the utmost harboring of his strength could not keep him alive the allotted time for man. "I am a Septimius Felton," he would say, with the rare smile so free from any bitterness, "seeking, not immortal, but mortal, life; and like him, I am told I must not permit myself to be very glad or very sorry, to exult or to deplore, to eat anything very nice, to fall in love, or to compete in races; since every extra heart-beat is so many taken from the few allotted me. My only safety lies in my fortunate lack of pride. I am not ashamed of being weak, or of being poor."

For he was poor. He belonged to the only branch of the aristocratic Van Austens that was not rolling in money, and, with all the aristocratic Van Austens' tastes and refinement, his resources were fewer than those of most men. When his Uncle Harry had offered to send him to college, he had said with characteristic frankness:

"I shall be glad to go, Uncle Henry, if I can go feeling that it is a pure, outright gift from you. I cannot go to be tortured into studying for scholarship as a matter of pride, or to feel that I ought to do all I can to repay the debt after I leave college. I know very well that I cannot live if I am worried. I don't want to die. I had rather live and not go to college, than go to college and die. Still, I would like very much to go

to college. If I can accept your gift as a gift, with a clear conscience, I will promise to live simply, graduate decently, if not as honorably as I might by over-study, and not to disgrace you. I should like to go, Uncle Henry, with this understanding."

And of course he went, and began there the quiet, singular career which marked him through life; a career which was simply the perfect, unquestioning acceptance of inevitable fact. It was well understood that Van Austen, as the *protégé* of a rich uncle, would spend no money except for comfortable expenses, though he had fully explained to his uncle that he did not care to be niggardly in regard to those. He lived simply, but well; he never entertained, but he accepted unquestioningly, and without returning, the attentions of richer fellows without a qualm. "If you knew," he once said, as the nearest approach to an apology that he ever made, "how fine it sometimes seems to me it must be to be able to give any one anything, you would not wonder that I am so lavish in giving you better fellows so many opportunities in giving."

He had graduated, as he said he would, decently, and then had sought the light work with ridiculously small pay which was all his strength was equal to. Two years later, his mother died, and Van Austen was alone in the world, except for the hosts and hosts of friends that he had always made for himself everywhere.

As we sat there now in his little parlor, talking of the old days and the new, his doorbell rang.

"Excuse me a moment," he said, as he rose slowly. "I am my own butler to-day. Emily sends me round hers on great occasions; but though I am perfectly willing to borrow him when I need him, I am not willing to borrow him when she needs him. I draw the line there. So I am my own butler to-day."

"Good evening," I heard from a strange voice as Van Austen opened the outer door. There was a severity in the tone which marked the voice of one who hardly expected to be admitted without difficulty, but who was determined to be admitted, whatever the difficulty.

"Good evening. Will you come in?" Van Austen said, with evidently unexpected civility.

"Thank you, thank you," said the stranger, in a tone of evident relief. "I called to see you about a little subscription for 'The Children's Aid Society.' I know your interest in it, and——"

"Excuse me," interrupted Van Austen with a smile which I felt through the thick *portière*, "but I think you mistake me for my cousin, Mr. Richard Van Austen. He is, I know, particularly interested in your society, and will no doubt befriend it. He is in Thirty-fourth Street."

"And you are——?" questioned the interviewer, with professional anxiety not to be thrown off the scent.

"I am unfortunately Mr. Robert Van Austen. The two Rs often confuse my identity with that of my cousin."

"Ah! excuse me; I see," answered the discomfited agent, with a tone which unconsciously implied that he had been a little surprised at the surroundings of the supposed wealthy Mr. Van Austen.

"Odd, isn't it," said Van Austen, as he sauntered back into the parlor and threw himself again upon the cushions, "that he never tried to get out of me what he could? The minute he found I was not the millionaire, off he went in search of the richer man, without waiting to see if I couldn't perhaps swell his fund by a widow's mite. If I had been an ordinary poor man, he would have tried to squeeze at least a dollar out of me, *en passant;* but it is one of my advantages in being the Van Austen who is not rich, to have the subscription agents drop me as if I were an agent myself, when they see a wealthier Van Austen behind me."

"Do you know Dobbs?" I asked, happening to recall the name on the opposite doorplate.

"Do I know Dobbs? Of course I do. What is more to the point, I know Mrs. Dobbs, and all the eleven little Dobbses. Mrs. Dobbs is a very clever little woman, who sends me in a bit of dinner now and then of a rainy Sunday, when she knows I hate to go out. I can't

return in kind, of course, as my dining-room is a farce; but once in awhile I hunt her up a bit of my old china, and she is delighted. She gives me bread, and I give her a stone; but then, you see, she likes the stone."

"Well, will you drive with me to-morrow?" I asked, as the clock struck nine.

"Very sorry; but to-morrow I drive with Morton. Really, Thorndike, I think I spend more time in the park in other people's carriages than any one person does in his own. Everybody remembers that I am the man who hasn't any horses, and so somebody comes for me very nearly every afternoon."

All the way home I pondered dreamily on the silent and dim fate of my college friend, which was in many ways so full of pleasantness, and yet which left a sense, if not of pity, for it was part of Van Austen's marvelous dignity that it was quite impossible to pity him,—at least of ineffable regret. He was not contented; any one could feel that unstirred aspirations left a constant sense of want in his hungry soul; but he was not unhappy. He had the rare grace of accepting the inevitable without a murmur. "I don't make the best of it," he had said once with a wave of the hand, in deprecation of a friend's comment on his cheerfulness "But I let other people make the best of it for me. Any one who can give me anything to alleviate the situation is a welcome being. I am saved from unhappiness by not having any proper pride."

I saw a great deal of him that winter. All of us saw a great deal of him, and it was odd how many jolly fellows went, not out of pure sympathy, but because they wanted to go, to those beautifully dismal little rooms in that ugly street.

"I can't make it out," said Van Austen one evening from his sofa, "why you fellows like to come here. I don't entertain, not having any larder, and I'm not well enough to go about and pick up interesting matters for you. But I think it may be just because I'm not a man with interesting news; I have no fad to worry you with,

and I am an excellent target for the *bon mots* you are dying to repeat yourselves."

Those evenings in the little parlor took on a sort of pathos as the spring came, and Van Austen's face grew paler and thinner, though, of course, as the pathos made itself felt, the outward merriment waxed stronger. Stronger, that is, until, even as a cover for dread and sadness, merriment could not be tolerated in what seemed hardly a sick-room, and yet was nevertheless the room of a dying man.

"It's because I am poor, doctor," he explained one day when his room seemed particularly overflowing with flowers and Black Hamburg grapes, "that I have so many luxuries. Everybody sends me these things because I haven't any."

We were careful not to tell him of the misfortune to the Blakes, who had been almost his nearest friends. But with one wasted hand he drew from under his pillow one day the newspaper which had the particulars, and said to us, in his faint voice, "Tell me about it."

It was the same old, old story of unwise, reckless speculation, ending in utter ruin. Van Austen made no comment as he listened to the pitiful story; but after a while said earnestly:

"I'm only a man of negative virtues, as you know. Sometimes I amuse myself as I lie here with wondering how I am possibly to get into heaven. But I have made up my mind that Saint Peter is going to accept one of my negative virtues, and let me in, out of curiosity, as the man who didn't speculate. Mind you—," and his eyes lit with feverish earnestness as he looked at us all in turn—"as *the* man who didn't speculate; not as *a* man who didn't speculate." If little Will Harkness, on whose face his gaze lingered longest, did not go to the wall in Wall Street afterward, I believe, upon my soul, it is due to that dying gaze of Van Austen's.

"I have been trying to compose my epitaph," he said again one afternoon, when he seemed more than ordinarily weak, and when Bob Carter and I were both with him, while his cousin Emily moved softly about in the

next room. "You will all try to say something fine of me; but, for the life of me, I cannot imagine what it will be. You can't say I was a good husband or father, or a generous citizen, or a great poet, or even a patron of poets. But I know you will say something, and I should greatly like to know what it will be."

And it was in the twilight of the same afternoon, that, turning his head with an effort on the cushions, he smiled again his sunny smile of the old college days, and said quietly.

"I've thought it out, Thorndike. You can put on my tombstone that I was the man who was not——"

A quick gasp—a flutter of the pulse—a sudden deeper pallor—our friend—was not.

In this humorous skit by Charles Mouselet (translated for ROMANCE by J. Murray Mitchell) a valuable hint is contained regarding ways and means for the impecunious. Books and papers are cheap and soon read. Real trips are dear and long, and one may often receive almost as vivid impressions from a good description as from seeing things with one's own eyes. Canned food is not to be despised when any other is unattainable.

AN INEXPENSIVE TOUR.

GONTRAN meets one of his friends in front of the Opera.

"You are just the person I wished to see," he remarks. "I wanted to bid you good-bye!"

"How so?"

"Well! I am going away shortly. Paris is not fit to live in at present, and I do not understand how you, one of our set, consent to wander in these intolerable streets."

The friend bows his head and walks away somewhat humiliated. Gontran goes on his way triumphantly, announcing the great news to all his friends. One of these, little Siste, who is more inquisitive than the rest, asks him where he is going.

"I have not decided as yet," answers Gontran.

"To a watering-place?"

"Pooh! that is not fashionable. I dream of Italy."

Little Siste, who wishes to find out just what is in Gontran's mind, remarks very seriously:

"They say it is a beautiful country!"

"I believe you," answers Gontran ironically.

He then looks at him askance and walks away. For fifteen days he takes pains to proclaim clamorously his departure, gives and takes commissions, and continually changes his plans.

At last, his friends, really tired of hearing always the same old story, begin to wonder when they meet him.

"How is it that you have not gone yet? Still here? When do you start? Have you decided to remain?"

Gontran feels that he really must do something at once, and one evening, meeting his best friend, Guido de Rhéteuil, remarks, "I have decided to start to-morrow."

"At last!"

"You will allow me to address to you my impressions from time to time?"

"Thank you. You will favor me greatly."

"I authorize you to communicate an abstract of my notes to our friends of the club," adds Gontran.

"You may rest assured that I will carry out your wish. Shall I accompany you to the station?"

"Thank you, no; it would be useless."

It would indeed have been useless, as on the following evening, protected by the falling shadows, Gontran with little luggage mysteriously took a cab, directing it, not to the station, but toward the distant quarter of Gros Caillon.

There he rented a room for ten dollars a month in Cometa Street, a street in which one need have no fear of meeting any of the Parisian fashionables. All summer long he remained there. He hired an old servant to attend to his wants, and also bought the necessary material for a large correspondence.

Eight days afterward, Guido de Rhéteuil received a letter, of which the following is an abstract:

"To Guido de Rhéteuil, Possident,
Rue Tour de Dames, Paris:

Steamship *Generale Garibaldi*, 14th May, 18—.

"How beautiful is the sea! How freely does one breathe when surrounded by this immensity of water! Ah, my dear Guido, how I pity you, who have to remain in that infected Paris. As you wish me to write all my adventures and sensations, I shall begin by remarking that I sailed on the *Generale Garibaldi*, a steamer plying between Genoa, Civita Vecchia and Naples. You well know my sociable temperament, so that it is hardly worth while to mention that I immediately made the acquaintance of the captain by offering him the cigars of our club.—Captain Paufili is a dear old fellow!—Going out of port the ship began to tip

a little. How wretched it is to be seasick! Luckily I did not suffer long. I have not told you yet about the passengers of the *Generale Garibaldi.*—English, all English! There is one English girl who is enchanting—a little girl, with a wealth of blonde hair falling on her shoulders. She often looks at me and I—Pst! I must not tell everything in a day.

"After all this talk, my dear Guido, I stop writing to go on deck and admire the far-off lines of the Corsican coast disappearing in the blue horizon.

"Yours affectionately,

"GONTRAN."

"P. S. You will receive this letter of mine, as well as the rest, through a third party who attends to my business interests in Paris."

Four days afterward a second letter came from Gontran, dated in Genoa:

"Hold me, my friend, hold me, as I cannot restrain the great admiration which overcomes me, while I exclaim Wonderful! delightful!—No one can imagine anything like it! Genoa is a city that does not resemble any other. It has a gulf, and oh! what a gulf!—and marble, marble everywhere, too much marble! They say the Ligures founded Genoa about seven hundred years before Christ. Later, the Romans united it to the Gallia Cisalpina. After the fall of the Roman empire it was taken and passed through the hands of different barbarous populations, until it became liege to Charles the Great. At the beginning of the Fifth Century Genoa declared itself an independent city and was governed by consuls, upheld by the senate. The people gathered in assembly on the public square and took part in the administration.

"In 1379 the Genoese and the Venetians, who controlled the seas, began to fight each other furiously and completely demoralized one another."—(Here it may be well to remark that Gontran had, before departing for Cometa Street, bought a Baedeker guide.)

"By the way: I have found my English girl of the steamer at Genoa. We live in the same hotel, and she is accompanied by an uncle with long whiskers and two cousins with pointed teeth. I have been told that she belongs to one of the richest families of Cambridge.—The day after

my arrival I began the attack. In love, I never waste time. A maid, generously bribed, has promised to convey to Miss Arabella (this is her name) a note, the triumphant result of which undertaking I patiently await."

When Gontran wrote these sweet words he had just dictated the items of his washing-list to his washerwoman, whose orthography had deeply interested him.

Thus the letters to Guido de Rhéteuil followed one another for three months. It was a flood of rhapsody. The most wonderful and amusing adventures were described in them: excursions in gondolas in Venice, fantastic serenades on the Lake of Como; battles with brigands; invitations to the Vatican. The last letter was dated from the foot of the crater of the Vesuvius.

Three months later, at the races at the Bois de Boulogne, a man throws himself into another man's arms——

"Guido!"

"Gontran!"

"As you see!"

"You look wonderfully well! My best compliments for your beautifully bronzed complexion."

"Send your compliments to the sun of Naples and the breezes of Sorrento."

"Oh, yes, I know!"

"Did you receive my letters?"

"Every one of them!"

"Did they interest you?"

"They astonished me!"

Guido de Rhéteuil seems to think a minute, and then he asks with a smile:

"So you are satisfied with your trip, are you?"

"Can you ask me such a question? Enthusiastic, my dear fellow!"

"If such is the case, I think you ought to pay me the rent of the room in Cometa Street, which you have unfortunately neglected to do. You see, my dear Gontran, I have only these small dividends to live on. My dear fellow, I am your landlord."

The praises of the honest man have been sung by the poet for many ages. Perhaps he is a rarer being than an honest woman; but here is the story of a thoroughly honest woman, as told by Helen Lee Sargent in *Harper's Magazine*.

"RALDY."

A STORY OF THE WISCONSIN RIVER.

"WHAT'LL they do?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Sim won't work, and they're poor as poverty. It's a year since the wife died, and now the old mother's gone. She brought in the pennies right smart."

"There he is now."

The two women stopped their whispering as the tall, loosely-built figure of Sim Peebles came shambling along the ragged street of "Dearborn City."

A look of unmistakable affliction rested upon his weak but handsome face, and a rag of black stuff was tied decently about his shabby hat. Two children, little more than infants, came running to meet him from the low but fierce-fronted house into which he finally entered with them, and then the two women went on with their interrupted conversation.

"Who's a-doin' things for them, anyhow? Who fixed *her?*"

"Him, I guess."

"Then he's smarter than I ever give him credit for."

A young woman who was walking hastily along the street had come close upon them while they were engaged in watching Sim Peebles, and had overheard these latter remarks of that gentleman's critics. She was above the medium height, and of a large and imposing figure, though far from graceful. Her large hands swung almost fiercely as she walked, and her tread was hard and masculine. With a mouth and chin handsomely and firmly though somewhat coarsely moulded, her broad and projecting forehead, and bril-

liant, fearless blue eyes, added to the heavy braids of flaxen hair which were wound neatly about her head, made her face striking, and even comely. The women turned with a start as they saw her, and realized that she had overheard them. Geralda, or, as she was commonly known, "Raldy," Scott was evidently a woman of whose opinion they stood somewhat in awe.

"*You* didn't offer to help Sim Peebles yesterday," Raldy Scott said disdainfully, pausing a moment in her hurried walk. "He was alone there with that dead woman and those little children, and yet you, his neighbors, women with husbands and children of your own, never offered to help him. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves," she continued, her eyes flashing, and her language, which had been much better than that of her slovenly neighbors, taking on in her excitement more of their peculiar Western twang. "And here, instead of walking up to his door and saying, 'Sim, can't we help you in your trouble?' you are standing in the street outside, wondering 'Who'll help him?' Raldy Scott despises lazy, shiftless Sim Peebles as much as you do; but she washed and dressed his dead mother for him, she fed his children, and, not being quite a brute, she proposes to take care of them till Sim Peebles can get somebody else. He swam in, when the Dells were full of ice, and got my father's body, so that his daughters could bury him decently, and Mart and I don't forget it."

And Raldy Scott swung along, leaving her listeners half-stunned with her scathing rebuke.

"Humph!" said one of them sullenly; "mebbe Raldy Scott can't always carry things so high."

"But the men'll always stand up for her," said the other one dejectedly. "They think she's pow'rful smart because she's made two or three trips up in the pines and down on the rafts with the men. It must 'a' ben since you come here that she come back the last time with her drunken old father. She sorter looked after him, I reckon. He had fine airy ways, *he* had, and nothing but a tipsy Irishman, after all; and she with

trousers and coat on, jest like the men. Oh," spitefully, "she ain't pertickeler, Raldy Scott ain't; can swim and pole a raft with any man in the Dells any day. Only since old Roy Scott died she dresses like the rest of us. Her sister Mart's goin' to get married. Likely *she* wants to, too;" and the two women laughed viperishly.

"Perhaps she'll get Sim Peebles," said the other, as they parted; "he's ben a likely young widower some time now," and they laughed a coarse, hateful laugh as they went to their homes.

The two or three scores of houses, many of them built of logs, which formed the homely, straggling street of Dearborn City, were inhabited almost wholly by lumbermen. During a large part of the year these men were away from their families, cutting wood in the pines; but when the ice began to break, and the great spring flood of the majestic Wisconsin rolled down from the north, they massed their logs into rafts, and came floating down the river to their homes. The village had been planted in the midst of the forest, and from many of its houses were visible the high red walls of the river as it shot through its wonderful Dells, and the roar of its torrent rose upon their hearing perpetually. Just below the site of the village there was a break in the high red sandstone which lined the river for miles—with occasional rifts like this one—and here, when the current would permit, the rafts paused in the spring long enough for those to land who were not absolutely necessary to conduct the unwieldy argosies to the distant Mississippi. If the current was too strong for the rafts to stop, as was generally the case, the men sprang into the boiling rapids and swam ashore. Many a life, even of experienced river pilots, had been lost in the attempt, and it was in this way that Roy Scott had perished.

He had indeed been an Irishman, and a dissipated one, but he had belonged to a wealthy and honorable family. He squandered his patrimony early in life, however, emigrated to the New World, and pushed into the wilds of what was then the farthest West. There

he became enamoured of the exciting life of the lumbermen of the Wisconsin, entered into it, met and married a quiet Swede girl, the daughter of one of his hardy comrades, and from their strange union had sprung the gentle Martha and the large-featured, fair-haired Geralda, whose Northern phlegm and endurance were united with the quick wit and intense passion of her Irish ancestors.

Geralda Scott clung to the memory of her father with an almost sublime devotion. His varied knowledge, a certain bluff polish of manner which his wild and roving life had never entirely obliterated, and his feats of strength and bravery, which were many and remarkable, she loved to dwell upon. From the upper windows of the rude, high-fronted "shanty" in which she and her sister lived, they could see plainly, some fifty feet down the red rock which bound the river, and a full two hundred above the swirling rapids, the legend, in bold white letters:

LEROY TALBOT SCOTT,

RIVER PILOT.

1843.

The girl never saw this without a secret thrill, for her father, years before she was born, had climbed unaided up the beetling crag, and had hung by one hand between heaven and earth while he had written it.

"Humph, Mart Scott!" she had said, sharply, to her quiet and unimpassioned sister, "what are you made of, that you can hear these things, and yet sit there like a block?"

But Martha, with her pale Northern face and stolid Swede manner, cared more for the stout young pilot who was going to marry her than for all the stories of her reckless father's exploits. To her, whose frame was less robust than Geralda's, and who had always lived at home with her gentle mother, he had seemed only a carousing debauchee, whose absence in the pines was a pleasant relief, and whose coming was dreaded like the coming of a cyclone. To tell the truth, Martha

regarded Raldy, who at sixteen had donned man's attire, as the disapproving neighbor had truly said, and had gone, under the leal though maudlin protection of her father, to do lumbermen's work and share lumbermen's fare in the rough life of the pineries—she regarded Raldy with almost as much dread as she had had of her dead father. But Raldy Scott, though she might be dreaded, was thoroughly respected by every man, woman, and child in Dearborn City. She was the soul of honor, and by hard work and economy she and Martha had managed to bury their father and mother decently, and then to pay off the mortgage on their little home. Raldy Scott had a brusque and forbidding manner, but, as Sim Peebles and many another man and woman had found out in times of trouble, underneath it beat a kind and generous heart.

Raldy Scott was as good as her word; and when the little funeral procession which followed Sim Peebles' mother to the grave moved away from the desolate hut, which Raldy's strong, neat hands had cleansed and purified, Raldy herself, with her brave, straightforward face held up defiantly to her gaping neighbors, had led one of the sobbing babies, while their shambling father, looking strangely kempt and tidy, walked beside the other. Then they had come home again to the little hut, and every day through the dreary November weather Raldy Scott had tended the orphaned children, and kept the cabin o' days, hastening home, when the little ones were safely in bed, to Mart and her own trim though only less humble home.

"What you goin' to git for your pains, Raldy?" said a kindly old lumberman to her one day. He had befriended her father, and Raldy could not answer him curtly.

"Talk behind my back—and experience," said Raldy, half-smiling. But Mart was to be married at Christmas time, so that Raldy felt she could afford to earn less for a while; and indeed, though she would not have allowed it to herself, she was becoming almost fond of the life which she was leading in Sim Peebles' cabin.

"You're a powerful hand to work, Raldy," said Sim to her one day, as he sat watching her swift and energetic movements about his cheerless little kitchen.

Raldy stopped, and squared her elbows, looking straight at him from under her great forehead.

"I'm setting you an example, Sim Peebles," she said slowly. "You're clever, and you're kind. You did me a great service once, and I'll never forget it; but if you had half the work in you that I have, you wouldn't be so all-possessed poor that you can't pay an honest woman for tending your wee bits and cooking your venison."

Raldy's tone forbade reply or argument, and Sim Peebles slunk guiltily away.

A day or two later he came in with a new brightness in his face.

"Say, Raldy," he began, half-sheepishly—for Sim Peebles had been "raised" in semi-luxury in an Eastern State, had loafed ever since he could remember, and hardly knew whether the announcement which he was about to make would be really creditable to him or not —"could you get along—I mean, would you stay and look after things here till I come back, if I go up in the pines till spring?"

Raldy laughed a rather incredulous laugh.

"What are you going to do up in the pines?" she asked at length.

"Chop," answered Sim Peebles succinctly.

"Humph! they've all gone long ago."

"No; there's a party going up to Stevens Point next week, and strike off from there."

"You can't chop," said Raldy contemptuously.

"Yes, I can, too."

"Well, then, go." Raldy spoke crustily. She would not give the peeping neighbors any chance to accuse her of spending soft words on Sim Peebles. Yet, truth to say, she no longer held him in the low respect which she had expressed in the screed delivered to her gossiping neighbors, and which her language to him would seem to indicate. In these long, quiet weeks since she

had come to live in his humble cabin, she had detected in the lonely, saddened man qualities which had softened her heart toward him. He loved his children, and though he knew little enough how to care for them, he yet "minded" them devotedly in his own rough way. Then Sim Peebles' almost womanish face was yet handsome and attractive when it was clean and shaven; and one day Raldy had come unexpectedly upon him with his eyes wet with tears, gazing upon a picture, which her quick vision noted, before he could put it away, as a likeness of his old mother.

"Humph!" said Raldy to herself, quite angry at a little secret tenderness which the sight had evoked in her, "Sim Peebles puts on considerable about his mother; but I notice he didn't get her a new dress while she was here, and if she had enough to eat, it was because she hoed the clearing and dug the potatoes."

Still, it was a fact, and Raldy, in a dim, unwilling way, knew it, that she was daily growing to set a higher value upon Sim Peebles than he deserved, and she felt this more definitely than before when he told her that he was going "up in the pines." There was in her a strange, an unreasoning aversion to having him go, glad as she was to see him developing something of the courage of a man.

She had repelled so fiercely the young men who, won to admiration by her spirit and good looks, had dared to make her any overtures, that Raldy had never yet had a regular love-affair, and, as is usually the case with a strong and self-reliant woman, weakness had won where force had failed. She could not help acting a little more tender and approachable than her wont as the day drew near for Sim Peebles to go; and Sim—poor Sim, who had come to worship the very ground that Raldy trod—Sim felt it, but he did not dare to speak.

He was to start on a Monday, and Raldy had patched and darned his clothes till he was fit to go. Sunday morning she went, as usual, to the little Lutheran chapel, the only place of worship which Dearborn City

afforded, and where her mother had been one of the most devoted attendants; and having come home again, she got the dinner and fed the children. Then she turned them out to play in the clearing, and leaving the door ajar—for it was one of the mildest and pleasantest days of early winter—she went singing about her work. Sim Peebles watched her as she moved here and there, and Raldy, independent and imperious as she was, stole now and then a furtive glance at him.

"He's handsome," she thought dreamily, as she gave a casual glance at Sim's waving hair and large brown eyes; "but," coming to herself a little, "how shiftless he is! But he's kind," wandering off again, "and he's done some brave deeds—but no pride, no ambition. But he's honest," thought Raldy again; "nobody ever said Sim Peebles wasn't honest; there's nothing mean about Sim Peebles, and that's one reason," excusingly, "why he's so poor." Then her thoughts drifted off to what Mrs. Jenks and Mrs. Smith, her hateful neighbors, would say, if she should happen, by chance—of course she wouldn't, even if Sim should ask her—but what would they all say, what would Mart say, if she should ever happen to marry Sim Peebles?

Here Raldy checked herself, for she was standing absently, with a plate of butter in her hand, the butter in great danger of slipping, and her song quite still. She had been singing the old revival hymn:

> "And when I pass from here to Thee,
> Dear Lord, dear Lord, remember me."

Sim saw his opportunity, and seized it, and as she hurried into the little pantry and out again, he spoke quietly and earnestly:

"That's what I've been thinking, Raldy—something like, I mean. When I'm gone away, remember me."

"I'm not likely to forget you, with the youngsters under my feet all day," retorted Raldy, with asperity.

"You have been very kind to me and mine," continued Sim, with a choice of words which proclaimed an early training greatly superior to that of the rough men around him. Raldy recognized this superiority. It

was, indeed, one of Sim's strongest claims upon her favor. But she was not to be tempted from her rôle.

"I didn't suppose you had noticed it," she said tartly.

"Noticed it! Why, Raldy!" in a tone of deep reproach. "And you can't think—I wanted to tell you before I went away—you can't think, Raldy, how it kind of spurs me up to try and be somebody. That's what makes me want to go up river now. I want to show you, Raldy—I want——" But here Sim Peebles choked up. His courage had given out. Raldy felt hers oozing out too.

"I guess I'll go home till supper," she said, and she darted away.

After supper she put the children to bed, and then brushed up the hearth and put the little cabin to rights, Sim meanwhile devouring her, as usual, with his eyes. Raldy had captured him, soul and body, and the nearer he came to the sublime sacrifice which he felt that he was making for her sake, the more completely his passion dominated him.

Raldy moved for her hat and shawl, and murmured something in a manner strangely unlike herself about "going home to Mart," when Sim Peebles caught her hand—no man had ever dared to touch Raldy Scott's person before—and begged her to sit down for a moment with him by the fire.

"You know," Sim said brokenly, and with a face like ashes, "it's my last night, Raldy." With all his love, he stood in absolute terror of her.

Raldy sat down with a strange docility, but Sim could not speak after all, and they sat for several moments in silence.

"Well," said Raldy at last, getting up in her old arrogant way, "I guess I'll go."

"Say first," said Sim, swallowing hard, and catching at her hand again, "tell me first, Raldy, that maybe, when I come home, if I do well, Raldy, and turn out better, that——" he paused.

"That what?" questioned Raldy, in so gentle a tone that Sim took heart wonderfully.

"That maybe you'll—you'll marry me, and live here always, and see to the children."

It was all out now, and Sim drew a deep sigh as he turned his handsome, effeminate face, almost strong in its expression of intense love, full upon the strangely hesitating woman.

Raldy dropped into her seat again, and buried her face in her hands. Then she let them fall slowly, and said, with a serious and deliberative air which would have daunted a less persistent suitor:

"You're an honest fellow, Sim, and you know that's a good deal to me—and you're good-looking, but I declare I don't know of any other earthly reason why I should marry you. You couldn't support me. How you have had to fly around to get enough to eat since I have been here! And what wages have you paid me?"

Sim fairly cowered before her; but, with a woman's perversity, Raldy Scott's love only burned the more fiercely.

"It's all true," he said mournfully, "but don't you see, Raldy, I'm turning over a new leaf? I'm going to work, and I'm going to show you, and the rest of them, that I can be like other men."

As Raldy looked at him, a tear glittered in her eye.

"Well," she said, rising, and with no hint in her voice of the tear, "when you come back'll be time enough to see."

"Oh, but Raldy," cried poor Sim, who had reached just the point where "despair sublimes to power," "won't you tell me that you love me—just a little?" He fell on the floor at her feet, and buried his face in her dress. "Haven't you any thought about me," he went on piteously, "only that I'm a worthless fellow?"

"Sim, you fool," said Raldy, raising him up with more tenderness than her words would seem to warrant, "do you suppose that I would have let you go on this way if I hadn't? Good-by, Sim;" and slipping away before he could stop her, Raldy left him with such consolation as he could gather from her last remark.

Sim did not go till nine o'clock the next morning,

and meant to have a few words more with Raldy before he left; but she was cold and incisive as usual, when she came at daybreak, and she went about her work in a way that precluded further conversation. Once she colored violently when Sim caught her eye, and some tender words rose to his lips at the sight; but she looked at him again so sternly that he was glad to withdraw into himself and dared not plead his cause any further.

The days of the winter wore slowly away, while Raldy did her self-appointed task, and bore unflinchingly the slurs of the gossips and the thousand little irksome trials of her position. At last the intense cold began to yield. March glided into April. The ice in the river thawed, and daily among its floating masses came down great rafts of logs, guided by sturdy lumbermen, whose cries echoed and re-echoed from the mighty walls of the river, and gladdened the waiting hearts in the little village.

"When will our men come?" an aged lumberman, too old to go "up river" any more, shouted as one great raft became wedged between rocks and ice, near enough to converse a little amid the tremendous tumult.

"In a week or two," shouted back a man who lived at the next landing, and knew them well. There was no time for further talk, for the great raft just then made free, and swung into the current, and with the loud cries of the men as they plied their heavy poles, and the rescuing and clambering up of several swept off, as they often were in the dipping and swaying of the raft on its perilous passage, it was carried out of sight, the echoes of the hubbub lingering long after the vision had vanished.

All along the straggling, forlorn, burned, stumpy street of Dearborn City, with its staring hotel, its half-dozen beer saloons, and its one small meeting-house, ran the good news, "The men will be back in a week or two," and Raldy Scott sang more blithely over her work, while visions of Sim Peebles in an absurdly glorified aspect floated all day through her mind, though, if anybody had insinuated as much to her, she

might have raised the old shot-gun in the corner, which no man in Dearborn City could handle better than she, and have shot him dead on the spot. Still, she had to acknowledge to herself the alarming extent of her infatuation, and chide herself a little. "I don't care," her heart had answered; "there's something about Sim Peebles that I like, and if he likes me, what difference does it make to anybody? There's nobody in this world that can dictate to Raldy Scott;" and Raldy drew herself up proudly. "He needs me—I can see that I'm just the woman he needs; and I like weak creatures. And he's honest, if he is shiftless; he wouldn't defraud a man out of a cent."

Raldy's straightforward soul clung desperately to that—Sim Peebles was honest. He might drink sometimes, though Raldy had never seen him the worse for liquor, but everybody called him "an honest fellow."

"Yes," Raldy said to herself over and over again, "he's a true, well-meaning man, and I like him; and if I want to marry him when he gets back, I'll do it, whether Mart or anybody objects or not."

The days dragged somewhat as a week went by and the men did not come; but Raldy read once again the few books which her father had left her, and which she had already worn threadbare, did her daily work, and tried to be patient, and every afternoon she went with the children down to the landing to watch the rafts.

It was Friday afternoon, and the April sunshine was warm and bright, when the noise of a great drive, manned by strangers, having just died away, a new one was heard coming down the Dells. The voices seemed to Raldy's quick ear familiar ones. She had thrown her long, heavy red cloak, such as all the Norse women wear, around her to cover her house dress, which consisted, as her mother's had before her, of a short stuff petticoat and a black bodice over a coarse woollen waist, and she drew her cloak closer, and gazed fixedly up the river, where the rafts always shot suddenly into view around a great bend.

The voices grew more distinct: "Halloo!" "Bear

a hand!" "Shove her in, boys!" "Keep her steady!" And the great drive came thundering into view, rising and sinking, creaking and rubbing, the strong poles keeping her clear of the rocks, and the shouts of the men coming down with startling clearness on the gentle wind.

A cry rose from the men on shore. Yes, these were their friends and neighbors, and there—there was Sim Peebles, straighter than his wont, and standing on the very edge of the logs, ready to leap into the current and swim ashore, for it was impossible to push the raft to land. Half-a-dozen others were beside him, mostly the older ones, whose families needed them. The youngsters would see the raft safe to its destination.

On swept the great drive, the men redoubling their cries as the passage became narrower and more dangerous; and just as they shot under the great white name of Leroy Scott, the river pilot, one after another of the black figures who were waiting sprang into the water, and began to struggle for the shore.

Raldy's pulses quickened, and a longing for her old wild life came over her. She had more than once made that leap herself, and no man of them all had battled more stoutly and resolutely than she with the freezing rapids.

One after another of the swimmers came safely through the five or six rods of foaming, icy water, which were all that were necessary in order to reach the shore; but as Sim Peebles sank after his plunge, a dozen floating logs passed over him. The logs were carried on, but he did not rise; another moment, still he did not rise.

Raldy Scott paused for no second thought. A strapping fellow near her was pulling off his coat; but before he could do it, she had flung her heavy cloak aside, bared her arms, and dashed past him. She was a bold and vigorous swimmer, and fought her way desperately to the place where Sim went down. Suddenly a man's white face glared from the water ten feet away. His eyes were set, and his mouth was open. Raldy strug-

gled toward him, seized his collar, and with the assistance of the young man, who had reached the spot just in time to help her bring her burden in, she towed him ashore. Once there, she lifted him as though he had been a baby, and poured the water from his lungs, loosened his coarse shirt, breathed into his bloodless lips, and poured a few drops of brandy down his throat, chafing his hands and chest meanwhile. Then she listened for his heart-beats, and a look of relief passed over her stern face.

"He's all right, boys," she said, turning carelessly to the breathless crowd about her. "Here, you, Sam Jenks, and the rest of you, you can carry him home. You'll find things all right there," and flinging her cloak around her, Raldy called the children and strode off, and by the time the men had fairly revived Sim Peebles, and had got him home, Raldy was at the door to meet them, her drenched clothes exchanged for dry ones, and the wet braids of her fair hair alone revealing that she had dared, not an hour before, the perils of the Dells of the Wisconsin for the sake of Sim Peebles.

"I hope," said Mrs. Jenks viciously, as she passed out with the rest of the crowd that had seen Sim safe home—"I hope you'll get paid somehow, Raldy, for all you've done; and I rather guess," with a meaning, and to Raldy an utterly maddening, leer—"I rather guess you're going to get something or other."

Mrs. Jenks discreetly passed out of ear-shot as she uttered her last words, the effect of which upon Raldy was rather impaired by the noise of the clink of glasses in the dingy little saloon opposite, and the voice of Mr. Jenks, raised purposely, so that Raldy might hear it—"I give you Raldy Scott, boys, the smartest girl on the Wisconsin River."

Raldy's training had not, unfortunately, taught her, much as she disliked drinking, to feel toward it exactly as an "Ohio crusader," and she took a grim satisfaction in imagining Mrs. Jenks' wrath when she too heard the toast, as she could not well help hearing it, and in thinking that these rough men, no one of whom would

dare to speak to her save in the deepest respect, yet admired her with all their souls.

In a few days Sim Peebles was all right again. He seemed in excellent spirits; but it was not until he had been at home for nearly a week that Raldy gave him any chance to "speak out." Then he contrived it only by desperately barricading the door, and sitting down in front of it, just as she was about going home for the night.

"I want to tell you something," he said piteously, for Raldy was severely on her dignity.

Raldy concluded to be cornered, and sat down to listen to him.

"I've saved up my pay," continued Sim, speaking a trifle hurriedly, "and I've done well, Raldy. I can support you well now. I got an extra job up there, and—and made some money out of that, and I've really done well, Raldy; you ask the fellows if I haven't."

Something in his manner made the quick-witted woman pause and look at him suspiciously; but as she looked, she saw nothing but Sim Peebles' handsome face, and great pleading brown eyes full of adoration for her, and she flung her suspicions to the wind.

"Well," she said calmly, "if you have money, you'll find use for it. I suppose you know by this time that I've run up quite a bill at the store since you went away; I told them there that I'd foot it if you didn't."

"I'll foot it—I'll foot everything," said Sim deliriously, taking her nonchalance, as well he might, for direct encouragement; "I've got enough to last us well for a good while, Raldy. And so it's all right, isn't it? —isn't it, Raldy?"

He rose to his full height with a sudden dilation of impetuous passion which compelled the scornful woman's admiration. Then he stretched out his arms to her mutely, and she let them fold her in.

She had been starved for love. "Now," she said to herself, laying aside all of her coldness and her asperity—"now I will love him as other women love. I will marry him. He has proved his love to me. He is

going to be a different man, and I am his motive. I will believe in him; I will be a true wife to him, and a mother to his little children." And she did not chide Sim Peebles as he rained kisses upon her fair hair and her smooth, broad forehead.

"To-morrow—to-morrow, Raldy," pleaded her intoxicated lover; "marry me to-morrow!"

"No," Raldy said thoughtfully, becoming herself again suddenly, and tearing herself away from him—"no; one week from to-day I'll marry you, Sim. And if I put this trust in you, Sim"—with a sudden quiver in the clear voice which thrilled all through Sim Peebles' poor shivering soul—"you won't disappoint me, Sim, you'll never disappoint me?"

"Never, Raldy, never," he said, with an almost manly tenderness, and he drew her unresisting face to him and kissed her once again before she passed through the door to her home.

Raldy's preparations for her wedding were few and very private. She did not tell even Mart. "If I choose to throw myself away," she said to herself—for Raldy Scott knew well that from the head of the Wisconsin to the Mississippi there wasn't a woman to equal her—"if I choose to throw myself away on Sim Peebles, it's nobody's business but my own. They'll talk enough afterward—and they may."

At last the morning came of the day which Raldy had set for her wedding; and Sim went about with a look of bliss upon his face which would have told the story to the whole neighborhood, in spite of his solemn promise to Raldy not to reveal it, if she had not studiously kept him busy upon the place in making up the garden.

They were to be married at noon. Eleven o'clock was near at hand, and Raldy called out softly to Sim to see to the children. She was going over to Mart's to put on her best dress, and was hurrying out of the gate, when she encountered Mrs. Jenks.

"Good-morning," said that lady beamingly.

Instead of pushing past her contemptuously, as she

would usually have done, something made Raldy stop civilly.

"Glad to see Sim's getting ahead a little," said Mrs. Jenks, with a smirk.

Raldy stared at her mutely, and did not stir.

"Sorry he's come by his money just as he has, though," went on Mrs. Jenks, sending her shaft well home.

The color left Raldy's steady face, and her mind flew back to the momentary suspicion with which she had first received the news of Sim's good fortune.

"How is that?" she said imperiously.

"Oh, don't you know?" rejoined Mrs. Jenks innocently. "All Dearborn's talkin' about it. You know Sim ain't oversmart about coverin' up his tracks."

"Well?" said Raldy breathlessly, as her tormentor paused.

"You know old Jake Torrey died up in the pines six weeks ago?"

"Yes, yes," impatiently.

"And maybe you know he died all alone with Sim Peebles?"

Raldy did not know it, but she bowed her head.

"At least," said Mrs. Jenks spitefully, "Sim thought he was alone, but my Sam happened to be within hearing, just out of sight, and he heard old Jake say, 'Take this money, Sim, and send it to my daughter in Varmount,' and he told him where, and Sim writ it down, and," went on Mrs. Jenks, with satisfaction enough to atone for all the innumerable slights and snubs that she had received at Raldy's hands, "and then the old man dropped away; but Sim, mind yer, he never said a word, not he, but he's come all of a sudden by a big pile, so he makes his brag—'extra job,' he says, I hear." And Mrs. Jenks passed on.

Raldy went a few steps further, her proud head bowed a little, and her firm step slow and faltering. Then she turned quickly and re-entered Sim Peebles' little cabin. The children were playing out-doors, and she closed and bolted the door behind her as she went in. Then

she motioned to Sim to sit down opposite her. Her keen, indignant eyes searched him through and through. He looked back at her for a moment with all the fond joy of an expectant bridegroom. Then the purpose of her gaze seemed to penetrate him. The light went out from his face, his eyelids drooped, his head fell. Then he groaned aloud, and she knew that Mrs. Jenks' story was true.

"Sim," she said softly, "is it true? Tell me as you would tell your Maker;" and there was a ring in her low tone which compelled him to be honest with her. "Did you take that money that Jake Torrey left you for his daughter, and pretend that it was your own?"

"Oh, Raldy," he began weakly, "not all—oh, not nearly all. You can write——"

She interrupted him sternly. "Did you take any of that money, Sim?"

"Just enough," he said pleadingly, "just enough to pay me for doing the business, you know, Raldy—not much, you know. Oh, Raldy, you won't cast me off for that, will you? oh, not now, Raldy, not *now!*" and the man, putting his head in her lap, wept bitterly.

She stroked his hair tenderly, but her firm face did not weaken.

"I have thought a great deal of you, Sim," she said, in a dry, hard voice, suddenly rising and pushing him from her, "but now that I find that you are a mean and dishonest man—that you can cheat the dead, Sim—that's all over. I hope you'll get somebody to take care of the children, Sim, for I must go. I reckon I'll go down to Fond du Lac or Milwaukee, and go out to service. Mart's married, and"—wearily—"I might as well."

And she turned before his face, unlatched the humble door, through which an hour hence she had thought to walk as a bride, and before he could open his paralyzed lips to speak, she was gone. And Sim Peebles never saw her again.

Human nature is a constant surprise in its uniformity. Whatever may be counted on to alter, human nature reveals the same weakness, the same selfishness, the same passions, from the Euphrates to the Oregon, and from Nova Zembla to Malacca. Adam wrestled with it, just as the man next-door wrestles with it to-day. Religion may modify it in one generation, but it springs up fresh and strong in the next. Civilization holds it somewhat in leash; but it is always lying in wait for a lull in public opinion, so that it may spring. It is a "bad lot," and so the great god Inari found it, in this quaint legend from the Japanese.

INARI'S JOURNEY.

THE great fox-god, Inari, once determined that he would make a journey through the city to find out where true honesty and goodness existed. It was a bad age of crime and corruption. The first place that Inari visited was the counting-house of one of the greatest merchants of the city of Yedo. "At any rate," he said, "I shall find fair dealing and honesty here, for this man's junks float on a hundred waters, his word is as good as a bond, and his name is a by-word for uprightness and integrity."

He took up his figure in the shape of a cobweb in a corner of the sample-room. The tide of customers and merchants flowed in and out; the money rattled into the coffers; the clerks were busy with pen and scroll; but no one saw what Inari saw. His heart smote him to see the tricks of trade and the deceptions practised; the chests of tea were filled with colored leaves and dust sweepings; the bales of silk were weighted with false materials, and their contents dyed with false colors; lacquer and bronze manufactured in the next street were sold as the veritable productions of old times; the very scales used were false; the entries in the scrolls were false; and the stories told to the customers were false. The next day the whole city was thrown into a state of consternation at the news that the great firm had failed, and the head partner had gone away no one knew where.

The next journey of the god was to the "yashiki," or palace of the great lord of Bizen, one of the haughtiest and proudest of the nobles of the empire. As he seated himself in the guise of a fly on the top of a sword-rack in the banqueting chamber, he said: "He is too great to be ambitious; he is too rich to be avaricious; he has too great expenses to be extravagant; his fame is too bright for him to dare to sully it by dishonesty; he is too familiar with pleasure to be vicious."

The banquet was spread, and the great lord entered in gorgeous apparel. The sweets with which the meal commenced were served in dishes of the purest Nagasaki porcelain, the rice was in the finest of old gold lacquer, the wine—that prince of wines, the "Flower in Full Bloom"—hissed and bubbled in vases of the choicest Bizen ware, while the rarest of fish and fowl came up in quaint dishes brought from China. Merrily the feast proceeded, the wine-cup circled incessantly, cheeks grew flushed, eyes began to sparkle, and tongues wagged fast. There was nothing in this with which Inari could find fault, for the Prince was wealthy, and it became his dignity to keep a sumptuous table, but he was annoyed and disgusted to observe with what brutality the Prince treated his wife, a poor, modest retiring creature, whose only fault seemed to be that she brooked her husband's insolence too meekly. If she spoke, Bizen answered her roughly; if she smiled, he frowned; and the poor woman knew not which way to look or how to behave. When the dancing girls were ushered in, a retainer, humbly prostrating himself as he crawled along the floor, brought the Prince a note. Inari, who of course could see through walls, doors, and everything, espied a poor ragged man, evidently half dead with cold and want, sitting in the snow outside. "Now," said the god to himself, "I shall see the true nature of the Prince." When Bizen opened the note, his face grew purple with passion, his brow was puckered into a network of frowns, and his hand stretched out to his sword—an act at table which is only tolerated under the most exceptional circumstances.

When Bizen had so far collected himself as to be able to speak, he roared, "What does the scamp mean by intruding upon my privacy with his beggarly petitions?"

"What is it?" asked his wife incautiously. The Prince turned on her like a wild animal. "What is it, madam?" he hissed. "Why, it's a letter from an impostor, who declares that I have ruined him by forfeiting his tenure last Summer; he says he is starving, and has the unheard-of insolence to ask me for the loan of a hundred riyos!"

"You can afford to let him have them, can you not?" meekly asked his wife: "so I will go and give them to him." The Prince raised his hand and struck the unhappy woman to the ground.

Inari could stay no longer. Outside, where cowered the beggar, he assumed the guise of a retainer. "Where do you live?" he asked the poor man. "At Kawasaki, your noble Honor," replied the man, trembling with terror, "and I have walked here through the snow some fourteen miles to ask his Highness for a little help, for I am very poor and miserable, and through no fault of my own." "Are you honest?" asked Inari. "I try to be, your Honor," answered the poor fellow. "I can easily find out," said the god; "so do not deceive me." The beggar looked at him. Inari placed his hand in the poor man's sleeve and disappeared. The beggar, bewildered, looked round, then felt in his sleeve, and pulled out notes to the value of five hundred riyos. Then he fell on his knees and cried: "It is the worshipful Inari himself!" and went his way rejoicing.

The next day the Prince of Bizen was murdered and his palace burned to the ground by a mob of discontented tenants.

The next journey of Inari was to a hall of justice. "If I don't find honesty here," he said, "I don't know where to look for it."

The day's business began, and Inari took the form of a pen in the hand of one of the clerks. "Call the first case," said the Judge, a big, heavy fellow, with a face which betokened constant acquaintance with the good

things of this life. The first criminal was introduced; he was carried in, for he had lain five days in a noisome cell with weights upon his back and legs, and could not move. "You are accused of robbery," said the Judge. "Nay, your Honor," whispered the poor wretch. "I was starving. I saw a rice cake on a shop shelf, and I could not resist the temptation to seize it." "Doesn't matter. It's robbery," said the Judge. "People's property must be protected. Fifty stripes with the bamboo, a month's hard labor upon rice and water, and think yourself lucky to get off with your head! Next case."

A dissolute-looking young fellow, fashionably dressed, swaggered in between two jailers. "Sorry to see you here, Mr. Hanaski," said the Judge, blandly. "Same as before, I suppose?" "Well, Sir," replied the young man, with an air of careless effrontery, "it was at the 'Three Pine Trees;' I suppose I had been drinking a bit; the wench was impudent, and I cut her down. I suppose a couple of hundred riyos for the family will settle it?" "Oh, as it was justifiable," said the Judge, "we'll call it a hundred. Good morning." The young man paid the money and left the court.

Inari shuddered. "Here," thought he, "is a poor wretch who is convicted of having stolen a cake worth half a tempo to appease the cravings of his hunger, and is condemned to be crippled for life; and a young blackguard who kills a woman gets off with an easy fine!" On the spot he struck the Judge with a dropsy, from which he never recovered; and the young murderer was waylaid by the friends of the girl and so maltreated that he died of his wounds.

Heart-sick and mortified, Inari said: "Now for Kawasaki. Possibly, but not probably, I shall find beneath the lowly peasant's roof what I have failed to discover in the gilded palaces of the mighty." To Kawasaki he went as a pilgrim. He soon espied the beggar cutting wood outside a poor but neat little hut hard by the ferry. Assuming an air of great weariness, the god addressed him: "I am bound for the holy O

Yama, to do my mid-winter penance beneath the cascade of Koyias. I am very poor, and cannot afford to go to one of the great tea-houses; perhaps you will let me rest here a while and refresh myself, in return for what few tempos I can give." The peasant took Inari's arm gently and led him in. "Oh, Kiku!" he cried to his wife, "here, quick, bring some warm water and something to eat and drink; here is a poor old pilgrim, tired and hungry." A pleasant-looking old woman approached at the summons and saluted Inari. Then the warm water was brought and she bathed the feet of the god, while her husband scraped together what little food and wine there was in the house and set it before him. "I feel ashamed," said Inari, "at trespassing upon the good nature of those who are as poor as myself." "Do not mention it, Sir," said the peasant. "We have to work hard for our living, but we have always something to spare for poor travellers."

"And how do you get your living, if it is not a rude question?" asked Inari. "I cut wood for the great tea-houses," replied the man, "and at busy time I help the ferryman. But I had such great good luck the other day that we are quite comfortable now." And he told Inari about his visit to the Bizen palace.

The god said nothing for a few minutes, and then he asked, "I shall be returning here in a fortnight's time; could you make it convenient to lend me fifty riyos?"

"Willingly, Sir," said the peasant, and he counted out the sum from his bamboo stem and placed the paper in the hand of the god. In a fortnight Inari returned to the peasant's house and said, "Here are the fifty riyos you were kind enough to lend me—and," taking from his own pocket a roll of notes, "here are five hundred more. I only borrowed from you to test your heart, and perhaps you can guess who I am." The astonished and delighted couple fell on their knees in an ecstasy of joy. Inari disappeared, and the poor peasant prospered ever after, until he became the owner of the largest tea-house in Kawasaki.

This exciting anonymous narrative, though tragic to a degree, may remind the reader of Mr. Stockton's very funny story of a similar nature. It would be interesting to know just how much truth is contained in "The Loss of the Olympia." It is certainly given by its skillful author an air of verisimilitude which is very convincing.

THE LOSS OF THE OLYMPIA.

ALTHOUGH I had the honor of serving under the Confederate flag during the greater part of what it is still the fashion to call "the late unpleasantness" in America, I am an Englishman, and have never ceased to be a British subject. It is perhaps for this reason that in the autumn of 1864, when the cause of secession had already begun to look very black, I was selected by the Confederate Government to carry to Paris some very important secret dispatches. The Southern ports were effectually blockaded by the Federal squadrons, and, upon my accepting the dangerous, yet withal attractive mission, it was decided that, instead of attempting to sail direct, I should make my way overland as best I could to New York, and thence take passage on board a British steamer bound for Liverpool.

I need not here describe the difficulties and perils of that overland journey. Suffice it to say that, after six weeks of travel, during which I met with many adventures and several hair-breadth escapes, I arrived in New York with my precious dispatches safe and sound. Anxious to avoid any suspicions that undue haste might have drawn upon me, I remained for ten days in the city, and then engaged passage on board the steamship *Olympia*. During my stay in New York I was introduced by some English acquaintances to an American family of the name of Vanhoof. Always afraid of exciting suspicion, I felt bound to agree to a proposition which was made to me by Mr. and Mrs. Vanhoof. Their daughter Celia was going to join her sister in England, and intended to sail in the *Olympia*, accom-

panied only by her maid. Would I, I was asked, act as the young lady's escort? I assented, simply because I did not know on what grounds to refuse; and so, one wet and miserable morning, we went on board the big steamer and were towed out of harbor.

The weather during the first three days of the voyage was wet, though not otherwise unpleasant; but on the fourth day the *Olympia* was overtaken by a violent gale from the westward. We were, I should explain, the only passengers, for communication between Europe and America was not then as easy and common as it is now, and neither the season nor the situation of affairs across the Atlantic encouraged people to travel eastward for pleasure.

That night was as dark as the grave, and at intervals of half-a-minute or less the vessel seemed to be suddenly brought to a dead standstill by the frightful concussions of the sea that broke over her bows. Every one who could do so turned in early, but no one slept; and next morning we learnt that the ship had lost a boat, that the massive iron davits which carried it had been snapped off level with the bulwarks, and that most of the other boats had been so damaged as to be useless. Yet the wind did not lull; and, shortly before midday, a great wave rushed the whole length of the vessel, swept it clean, and dragged away three of the crew, whom it was absolutely impossible even to attempt to rescue. This wave partially extinguished the fires, and the result was that for some hours the ship lay like a log at the mercy of the storm, her cabins flooded, everything saturated with ice-cold water, and the vessel herself lying on her beam-ends and tossing so wildly that we could neither sit, stand, eat, nor sleep.

The ship seemed to be doomed to disaster. The captain himself, an old salt who had sailed the Atlantic for forty years, had never before experienced such weather, and the hands, always rather prone to superstition, declared with conviction that "summat was wrong somewheres." They had no respite, poor fellows. The donkey-engine, which ought to have worked the steam

pumps, was smashed, and the pumps, which it was necessary to keep going continually, had to be worked by hand. Every seaman knows how fearfully labor of that kind tells on a crew when there is a heavy sea on, and when the men, in addition to being always wet through, are half-frozen. The hurricane became, if possible, more and more savage: it literally blew great guns; and on the evening of the sixth day the captain, feeling that his crew were rapidly growing too weak to struggle any longer, came down into the saloon, and bade us prepare for the worst. He was still talking to us, when a shock, different from any that we had already experienced, shook the vessel; and a moment later it was reported that her shaft was broken, and that her engines were, therefore, useless.

The only course now open to the unfortunate *Olympia* was to scud before the gale. A sail was hoisted; but, in less than a minute, it was blown to shreds. The captain returned to the deck and caused himself to be tied to the mainmast; but his presence there was of little use. The men at the wheel were numbed and powerless; and, although they were relieved every half-hour, each new watch proved to be almost as incapable as the old one.

At the captain's request, I remained in the saloon with Celia and her maid; the main hatches and companion were kept strictly battened down; and the only communication between the deck and below was by a single companion. Even this was only opened by special directions from the captain, who feared, and with good reason, that his ship might at any moment be swamped by one of the heavy seas that, often in quick succession, broke over her. Though his feet were frost-bitten, he gallantly remained at his post.

It was midnight. The storm was more terrible than ever. A particularly heavy squall carried away the foremast, snapping it off with a sudden crash about six feet above the deck. The word was given, "All hands on deck to clear away wreckage!" and the shivering crew swarmed up the companion, and, with axes and

capstan bars, set to work to throw the shattered mast and gear overboard. Cold, stiff, and weary, the men made but slow progress on the slippery ice-bound deck. More than one of them, indeed, had been washed away in the struggle, when suddenly, and without warning, the wind dropped. I heard quick shrieks of terror, and the voice of the captain shouting to the men to close the companion. Then all the sounds on deck were drowned in a wild, unearthly roar that now rose high above the turmoil of the waves. There was a fearful shock, and the smitten vessel seemed to spin round and round as if she were descending the vortex of a whirlpool.

"Oh! What has happened, Mr. Herrick?" gasped Celia. "Are we sinking?"

"God alone knows," I answered, "but something very awful must be upon us." Just then the bows of the *Olympia* were lifted bodily out of the water, a bitter cry of agony and horror was audible from the deck above the roar of the conflicting elements; the vessel reeled and quivered as if she had come into violent collision with a rock or an iceberg, and so nearly perpendicular did she rear herself that I feared she must inevitably sink by the stern ere she could regain an even keel. She came down again, however, not gradually, as on the slope of a roller, but suddenly as with a thump; and then the unearthly din slowly died away and gave place once more to the ordinary whistle and whine of the storm.

The frightful episode had, probably, not lasted more than twenty seconds, yet it had left the saloon a scene of ruin and desolation. All the glasses were broken; all the movable furniture was huddled in a confused heap at the end of the cabin; and nearly a foot of water rolled about the floor. Celia, the maid, and I were almost as wet as we could have been if we had been standing on the upper deck.

As soon as I had calmed my companions a little and had assured them of my conviction that the worst of the storm was over, I rang for the steward, the only other

person whom I knew to be in our part of the vessel. As the man did not answer the summons, I mounted the companion-steps, and listened against the deadlights at the top in hopes of being able to hear what was going on upon deck. No sounds, however, were audible save the howling of the wind and the dull splash of the waves as they broke over the vessel and ran off again by the scuppers.

Descending once more, I went in search of the steward, but, not knowing my way about the ship, and the passage being unlighted, I had to return to the saloon without finding him.

Celia and her maid were preparing to go to bed after the long day of excitement and terror, and were only waiting to bid me good-night.

"I think that the sea is quieting down a little," I said, hopefully; "and I trust that the captain gave you an unnecessary fright this evening when he told you to prepare for the worst. It has been bad enough, but we still have the good ship beneath us, and I should not be surprised if, in the morning, we find that the sun is shining and the storm has worked itself out."

I also turned in. My expectations were justified. I succeeded in getting a good night's sleep, and when I awoke, the sea was comparatively calm, and there was every prospect of a fine day. I rose, and was rather astonished to find that the steward had not brought me my hot water as usual. Attributing the omission, however, to the disastrous consequences of the previous night's turmoil, I washed and shaved in cold water, and then went into the saloon hungry as a hunter, prepared to see breakfast ready on the table.

But no signs of breakfast were visible. The saloon remained in the condition in which I had left it, and no one could be heard moving about either above or between decks.

I rang the bell sharply, but there was no reply. The deadlights were still up, and almost the only light in the saloon, at half-past eight o'clock on a fine morning, was the sickly light of the cabin lamp that, owing to

the breaking of its chimney, had filled the room with smuts and evil odor.

I rang again, and then unscrewing the lamp, and carrying it with me, went in search of the missing steward.

This time I found him—dead on the floor of his cabin, whither he had evidently been thrown by the great concussion of the night before. The poor fellow had apparently been lying half-dressed in his berth, believing, probably, that his services would not be required again until the morning, and had been thrown violently out, his head coming into contact with the sharp brass-bound corner of his chest.

I was now thoroughly alarmed. Where was the negro who ordinarily waited at table? What could the cook be doing? And why had not the cheery captain come down in accordance with his wont?

Sick at heart, and convinced that something far more terrible than I had up to that time imagined must have occurred, I once more mounted the companion-staircase. I knocked loudly at the door which led out on deck; but there was no response. I hammered at it with fists and heels; but in vain. The deadlights at the top had not been removed, although there was no further need for their protection. Returning again, I found a meat-axe in the pantry; and with this, after ten minutes' work, I forced out one of the panels of the companion-door, which I then opened by turning the key from outside.

The pleasant fresh breeze of morning greeted me as I stepped on deck; but that was the only welcome thing that I encountered while I was making the fearful round of the ill-fated ship.

All the masts had gone by the board, only their stumps remaining. The deck-house, too, and the bridge, and the bulwarks and boats had gone; and the only things left in their old positions on deck were a binnacle, and the entrances to two of the companions.

Lashed to the stump of the mainmast was the frozen body of the captain, covered from head to foot with glistening ice. He had died at his post.

It was a pitiable sight; yet worse remained to be seen.

I noticed that the ship was very much down by the head, and, upon walking forward, I discovered that the forecastle companion door had been wrenched from its hinges, and that the bow compartment was full of water. Even while I gazed into the black gulf beneath me, I saw floating in it the bodies of several of the seamen; and then the hideous truth broke in upon me, and I knew that the two women and I were the only living souls on board the *Olympia*.

No wonder that I felt as if all my strength had ebbed from me, when once more I found my way into the saloon. Where I was I knew not. For many hours the vessel had drifted with the storm; my knowledge of navigation was not sufficient to enable me to take an observation, and so to arrive at my position. I could do nothing.

I mechanically unscrewed the deadlights that covered the saloon ports, and then tried to put the room in something like order.

Celia entered while I was engaged, and looked at me in wonderment.

"What is the matter?" she asked. "Why don't you leave that to the steward? I suppose that he has overslept himself, poor fellow; but there is no great hurry for breakfast, is there?"

I turned my face from her, not liking to trust myself to tell her the truth.

"Well," she continued, "since it is such a lovely morning I shall go on deck."

"For God's sake, no!" I ejaculated, rushing to place myself between Miss Vanhoof and the door. "I must tell you, I suppose. A most awful thing has happened. I do not quite know what; but I think it must have been a waterspout that frightened us so last night. You must not go on deck. There are things there which you must not see. Indeed you must not go."

Celia saw by my manner that I was very much in earnest. "Tell me," she said, losing her color, "has any one been killed? Has any one been hurt? Oh, let me go and help them."

"Sit down," I said solemnly, "you can do nothing. We three are in the hands of God. In all this ship, we and your maid are the only living creatures."

"What do you mean?" she cried, becoming still paler.

"Last night, in that fearful commotion, we heard shrieks even above the roaring of the wind and the dashing of the waves. They came from the crew. Heaven alone knows how it all happened; but I have been on deck, and I have seen the work of the storm."

She looked at me, speechless and with evident horror. At last she rose, trembling, but self-possessed.

"You must save us," she said. "You must save me. I cannot die. It is cruel! And we are all alone, here, in mid-ocean!"

I gently freed myself from the hand which she had placed upon my shoulder. "I must go," I said, "if we are to escape with our lives. We must do our best to attract the attention of passing vessels. If we have any more rough weather, it may sink the ship altogether." And I went on deck.

With the axe I reverently cut down the captain's body, and then, rolling it in a cloth which I obtained from below, I weighted it, and lowered it overboard. I also committed the steward's body to the waves, and, with the few facilities that were at my command, battened down the forward companion, for, while that remained open, I dared not allow the women to come up on deck. When I had fastened a handkerchief to the stump of one mast, and a piece of sailcloth to that of another, and had assured myself that no vessel was in sight, I returned to Celia, whom I found bending over her maid, and trying to restore consciousness, for the girl had fainted.

Feeling that food was a prime necessity for all of them, I took the steward's keys and foraged in the pantry and storerooms, and had no difficulty in finding plenty. To persuade the women to eat was a much harder task. The maid had recovered from her swoon, but she was hysterical, and Celia declared that she had no appetite, and I was obliged to speak quite roughly

to the poor girl before she would even drink some coffee that I prepared for her. In time, however, after I had impressed upon her that there was much to be done, and that she would have to share the work with me, she grew a little less melancholy; and after breakfast I took her and her maid on deck, and left them there to watch while I went below and tried to obtain some idea of the whereabouts of the various supplies of which I was in need.

I procured some coals from the bunkers, rearranged and lighted the stove in the saloon, and a second stove, by means of which cooking operations could be carried on in the pantry; and in the chart-room came upon an excellent glass, which I lost no time in carrying up to Celia. By midday I had a large flag flying five and twenty feet above the deck, and had the satisfaction of feeling that no ship could come within a radius of eight or ten miles without seeing it.

But when all the needful supplies had been found, there was little for me to do save to watch. Celia's maid cooked the meals; and, while Celia and she were below eating their share, I remained on deck, going down when they relieved me, and hastily swallowing my portion. The weather grew considerably warmer, and even the women could keep watch during the day-time without much personal discomfort; but at night the work could only be done by me. At dusk I lighted all the lanterns that I could lay my hands upon, and fastened them to my improvised flagstaff and to the stumps of the masts. At ten I sent the women to bed, and, with my thickest great-coat buttoned up under my chin and a rough pilot-jacket beneath it, went on deck to remain there for eight hours.

It was a moonlight night, and there was almost a dead calm—a strange contrast to the riot and turmoil of the previous evening. The sea resembled a slightly ruffled sheet of molten silver, and the light swell that is seldom or never wholly absent on the Atlantic was not sufficient to cause any perceptible motion to the dismasted vessel.

Although I am, I hope, no coward, I kept aft. There was something horrible in tramping the deck above the watery grave of those unknown and unnumbered dead in the forecastle; and, besides, the stern of the vessel was higher than the water-logged bows, and from it I could see further than from any other part of the ship when—as happened scores of times during my watch—I swept the dim horizon with my glass, each time seeing nothing, and each time turning away with an ever-increasing load of depression on my heart. All night long I watched in vain; at six o'clock I awoke the women, and, as soon as they had relieved me, turned in to get a couple of hours' sleep before breakfast, leaving word that I was to be called if any sail were sighted.

When I awoke again, it was nearly nine. Celia had let me sleep, and had with her own hands prepared my breakfast, while her maid, who had now recovered from the first shock of the calamity, remained alone on deck.

And so another long day slowly passed, and at its close help seemed to be no nearer than in the morning. For forty-eight hours we had been drifting at the mercy of the winds and currents; we had been long enough at sea to have almost reached Queenstown, and yet we were still probably within two or three hundred miles of the American coast. That night I again kept watch, but it was drearier work than it had been before. Hope was dying down. At that season of the year it was not likely that many more hours would elapse without bringing rough weather; and I knew only too well what frightful risks the disabled ship would run directly the sea should rise again. My anxieties were further increased by the knowledge—obtained surreptitiously during the day—that the *Olympia* was slowly but steadily settling down. The forward bulkheads were not absolutely water-tight; but it was not the leakage from the forecastle that I feared. That would only help to put the ship once more upon an even keel. There were other leakages as well. On the night of the fearful storm, the vessel had been strained beyond

endurance; and I satisfied myself that far more water was entering the hold than was draining from the forward compartment. The level there was only a few inches lower than it had been on the morning when I had first seen the drowned bodies floating below; but the level in the main hold was on the second night (Wednesday) fully ten inches higher than it had been on Wednesday morning; and at that rate of progress it seemed inevitable that the *Olympia* must sink in two or three days, if not sooner. All the pumps were damaged or wholly destroyed, but even if they were not, we could not work them.

I determined to prepare for the worst, and, next day, to attempt to make a raft out of hatches and barrels, so as to be ready, in case of imminent danger, to leave the ship; and I occupied a great part of my long and dreary watch in noting down a list of all the provisions and necessaries that would have to be packed up into convenient parcels for stowage on the frail raft on which we might so soon be obliged to take refuge.

During the night the wind chopped and changed continually, never blowing from one quarter for more than half-an-hour at a time, and in consequence I was more than ever in the dark as to my position, and at last I even gave up attempting to guess where we were.

"You are looking very ill," said Celia to me, when, after I had slept a short and restless sleep, she gave me my well-earned breakfast. "If we are not saved to-day, I must watch to-night. I have had two nights sleep since we knew what had happened to us; you have been only a few hours in your cabin, and I am sure that you have hardly shut your eyes for anxiety."

I smiled sadly. "Instead of getting more rest," I said, "I must take less now. I don't want to frighten you, but to-day we must try to make a raft. I find that the vessel leaks terribly. I have just been down into the hold. The water there is nearly a foot higher than it was twelve hours ago, and we cannot prevent its rising. You can see for yourself that the ship is settling down."

"Don't despair," she said. "See how well we have got on so far! We shall see a sail to-day, I hope."

"Ah! hope is a feeble reed for us. We must work. We must do our best to make a raft; and, above all, we must waste no time."

"And for how long," she ventured timidly, "do you think that the ship can float?"

"I can't say. Perhaps for two days; perhaps not for one. Now let us begin."

I had already dragged up from below two cylindrical balks of timber. I had determined to build the raft on these, so that in case of need they might serve us as rollers to aid us in launching it. Empty barrels and cases were not plentiful. Such things are generally thrown overboard as useless. But I had the good fortune to find some casks of Madeira, which had presumably been shipped in order to benefit by one or two ocean voyages, and I knocked out the bungs of these, drained away the generous wine, and having rendered them watertight, hauled them, with much difficulty, on deck, and lashed them together as a buoyant understructure for our new craft. But to broach six heavy casks, and then by sheer main force to hoist them out of a vessel's hold, are operations which, when there is but one man to perform them, take a great deal longer to carry out than describe; and it was already growing dark when the last of the six reached the deck. I contented myself for the nonce with tying it firmly to the others, and lashing the whole mass securely to the stump of the mainmast; but my ultimate design was to overlay the cask with the wooden coverings of the hatchway, and so to make a kind of deck, upon which to stow provisions and baggage.

At ten o'clock I went down into the hold. The water there had risen more than a foot since the morning. When, therefore, Celia implored me to go to bed, and to let her watch, at least during the earlier portion of the night, I dared not agree to the proposal.

"Watch, if you think that you are able," I said; "but I must watch, too. We must go on with the raft.

Time presses. We cannot be certain now that the ship will be afloat in the morning. Tell your maid to bring up your things on deck. We must be ready."

All that I valued I had with me—my money and the tin cylinder which contained the dispatch.

By the sickly light of the lanterns we worked nearly all through the chilly night. The hatches were lifted on, and fastened with ropes and wedges to the casks; and two chests, to serve both as lockers and seats, were nailed upon the hatches. At five o'clock, seeing that good progress had been made, I sent the women to bed; but two hours later I felt so utterly incapable of keeping my eyes open, that I had to recall them, and to go to my own berth, directing them before I went to collect all the required stores on deck, and to wake me at the first sign of danger.

The last morning dawned cold and gray. Between waking and dreaming I was tossing in my bunk, unable, in spite of my fatigue, to rest peacefully, even for a minute. The ripple of the waves against the ship's side was lulling me off for the third or fourth time; when, with a cry, Celia's maid burst into my cabin.

"We are sinking, sir! Come! Come for God's sake! Quick!"

When, startled by this exclamation, I leaped, ready dressed, from my berth, my feet splashed the water that already covered the floor of the cabin to a depth of more than an inch, for the subtle enemy had silently crept in upon me while I dozed.

Hastily seizing one or two things which I thought might be useful, I rushed on deck. Celia was tolerably calm, but the maid was again wild and hysterical, and she was of no assistance in launching the raft; indeed, she was rather a hindrance than otherwise. Fortunately the sea was almost still, and therefore there was but little difficulty, and no danger, in pushing the improvised craft overboard to leeward. As soon as it was afloat, I helped the two women to get upon it, and then I hastily handed to them the stores and necessaries which had been accumulated in readiness. The raft

gave perfect satisfaction, being both buoyant and steady; and when apparently everything had been piled up and secured upon its small deck, and I felt that I dared no longer remain with the ship, I joined the others and reluctantly pushed off.

We soon spread a little sail by means of an oar and a boat-hook, and the raft, in spite of her clumsy construction, drifted away eastward at the rate, I dare say, of two or three knots an hour. The motion, slow though it was, was a relief to us; and for the first hour or so the spirits of Miss Vanhoof and myself rose considerably. But the maid was taciturn and strange in her manner.

For some time we watched the vessel which we had left under such terrible circumstances: and we had almost begun to wonder whether, after all, her cargo would not keep her afloat, when, at about ten o'clock, her stern suddenly canted up into the air, and she sank head foremost, leaving no perceptible trace of herself upon the bosom of the sea. We looked in solemn silence toward the spot which had so nearly been our common grave. I was sad, and tears glistened in Miss Vanhoof's eyes, but she brushed them indignantly away.

"I am afraid," I said at last, "that our prospects are rather black. We have now only our provisions and this wretched raft to depend upon. The least rough weather may deprive us of one, or even of both, and so we must make up our minds for the worst. Yet we must not be altogether down-hearted. There are at this moment hundreds of ships in the North Atlantic, and it is quite likely that we may drift across the track of one of them."

"Good Heavens!" interrupted Miss Vanhoof, who had just then begun to take stock of the provisions and stores, "we have brought no water."

"No water!" I exclaimed, with consternation and incredulity. "Impossible! I filled two kegs last night, and put them ready on deck. They must be here."

But they were not to be found. "Surely," said Miss Vanhoof to her maid, "you did not touch them?"

The poor girl's reply was a peal of idiotic laughter;

and at last we discovered that, apprehensive that the raft would be overweighted, she had quietly in the darkness rolled them into the sea, not realizing in her hysterical excitement that the kegs contained the most important portion of the whole equipment, and, believing, as she declared, that they were full of spirits.

For an instant, I confess, I felt as if I could strangle the woman who had thus spoilt my plans; but, when she knew what she had done, her self-reproaches were so bitter that I could not help pitying her. It was only clear that she was rapidly becoming less and less responsible for her actions.

"Well," said Miss Vanhoof bravely, "we must suffer together then, I suppose; and, after all, I am to blame for not having watched the kegs, and for not having missed them before we started."

The prospect was now truly frightful. The wind was piercingly cold; the torments of thirst were almost within sight; and the unhappy maid was in such a condition that it was evident that she might again imperil the chances of her companions.

I made Miss Vanhoof lie down, and, having made her as warm as I could, devoted myself by turns to scanning the horizon and to watching the girl. I felt that, come what might, I dared not sleep. The dangers were too many and too imminent. In order to keep myself awake, I chewed tea-leaves and continually wet my head with salt water.

It was about two o'clock, and Miss Vanhoof was sleeping quietly, when the maid stole up behind me. I was standing against the mast. Putting her hands upon my shoulders, she hissed into my ear, "I want something to drink!"

"I can't help it," I returned, as I shook myself free and faced her; "you threw the kegs overboard, you know. I am very sorry, but if you are thirsty, it is your own fault."

She laughed at me. "Guess you want me to believe that lie," she said; "but you've got water, I know, and I want some."

"There is no water on the raft," I replied, "so sit down and be quiet."

Instead of obeying me, she began to search among the parcels and packages, and to fling them about, quite regardless whither she cast them.

"You will throw something overboard if you are not careful," I said sternly. "Sit down, or I shall have to tie your hands."

She laughed again. "Tie my hands!" she exclaimed in derision. "Guess I'll jump overboard first."

Seeing that she was preparing to put her mad threat at once into execution, I sprang upon her, and seized her by the shoulders.

"Don't be insane," I said. "You are no worse off than we are. Wait and hope!" and I opened for her a tin of preserved meat, the juicy jelly of which she swallowed with avidity. "Now," I continued, "unless you will promise not to make any further attempt upon your life, I shall really be obliged to tie you to the mast."

The girl sulkily gave the required promise, but a couple of hours later we caught her soaking her handkerchief in salt water and squeezing it into her mouth, and by sunset her senses had completely left her, and she was chattering insanely to herself.

"You must sleep," said Miss Vanhoof to me, "or you will die. You have had no real sleep for more than three days."

"I am beginning to think," I replied, "that I shall not sleep any more until I sleep for good. I cannot leave you alone with her. She might murder you, or push both of us overboard. But you can sleep. Sleep while you can."

"No," she returned; "I shall not lie down to-night. If anything were to happen to you, we should all be lost, and I see how weak and tired you are already. Besides, I have slept well to-day."

The maid had begun to moan petulantly for water, but there was nothing to be done for her.

"Are you not thirsty, too, Miss Vanhoof?" I asked.

"Yes; my mouth feels like brown paper, but it is useless to grumble. You are as badly off, I am sure. What shall we do if we are not picked up? We shall go mad, too, shall we not?"

I turned away without replying, and, for the hundredth time that day, swept the horizon with my glass. The sun had just dipped in the west, and sky and ocean were reddened as with the hue of blood.

"What is that?" I ejaculated, starting and pointing anxiously across the ruddy waters at a small black object which stood out against the dazzling glow of the sunset.

"Aye! What is that?" echoed the maid, who leaped to her feet, and with extraordinary tokens of excitement went to the very edge of the raft, and gazed intently in the indicated direction. It was a sail. A few moments swept away all doubt upon that score; and, moreover, it was approaching us. Poor Miss Vanhoof, who until then had so admirably retained her self-control, uttered a cry of "Thank God!" and sank first to her knees and then senseless and inanimate prone on deck.

I was in the act of stooping to attend to her when the maid, with a yell as of a demon, jumped headlong into the sea.

I flung her a rope's end, but she declined to take hold of it; and, as it was evident that she could not swim, I hurriedly tied the other end of the rope to the mast, took the slack in my left hand, and leaped after the would-be suicide.

The water was like ice, and I was woefully weak; but by great efforts I managed to reach the drowning woman and to grasp her by the hair. She struggled violently. Twice she grasped me by the throat, and I had to choke her off, and when at last she was senseless and struggled no more, I was so exhausted that I could not even pull on the rope, the end of which I still retained.

Then cramp took hold of me, and I lost hope. I remembered the rescuing ship that was so near at hand, and the dispatches which I was carrying to Europe;

but I did not suffer. My eyes looked up for a moment at the still glorious beauty of the evening sky, and then closed, as I thought, for ever. But my time had not come. Miss Vanhoof had opened her eyes and had seen what had happened. Not many yards from her I was struggling in the sea. By gently hauling on the rope, which I fortunately clutched convulsively in my need, she drew me to the raft's side and dragged me senseless on board.

Half an hour later the ship *Rosicrucian*, five days out from St. John's, Newfoundland, and bound for London with cargo, came alongside and lowered a boat. At first the people believed that both Miss Vanhoof and I were dead; and it was not until the following day that I awoke from the comatose state into which I had fallen while attempting to save the wretched girl, whose efforts to destroy herself had ultimately been but too successful. Even then I was so weak and weary that I could do little save ask my whereabouts. It was not until Sunday that I appeared on deck; but, in the mean time, I had seen Miss Vanhoof.

I do not recollect that there was any love-making between us. I only remember that, as she sat by my cot, I took her hand and that it seemed to me to be the most natural thing in the world that I should ask her to be my wife, and that she should say "Yes." The love-making came afterward; so at least I judge from a remark of the genial skipper, who, as we were coming up Channel, found us one evening together behind the wheelhouse, and said: "Wa'al! Of all the spooney, mooney, self-satisfied, excloosive pairs as ever I clapped eyes on, you air by some chalks the very wustest couple. No! Don't you inconvenience yourselves, Miss Vanhoof and Mr. Herrick. Bless you! I've been through the mill myself. But," with a wink at me, "see here, Miss Vanhoof, don't you give your affections to no Reb. Mr. Herrick is a Reb., and fo't along with General Lee. That's so," with another wink, "eh, Mr. Herrick?" But it was too late. Celia Vanhoof had made up her mind.

The following true fragment of history has been written for ROMANCE by Mary E. Griffiths. It lends a fresh and loftier interest to a character already among the most famous of contemporary women.

AN HONORABLE ANCESTOR.

WHEN the bigotry of the last James compelled his subjects to take up arms against him, Sir John Cochrane was one of the most formidable enemies to his dangerous usurpations, and one of the most prominent actors in Argyle's rebellion. For ages a destructive doom seemed to have hung over the house of Campbell, uniting in a common ruin all who joined their fortunes to the cause of its chief. Sir John Cochrane was no exception. He was surrounded by the king's troops, and, after a long and desperate resistance, he was taken prisoner, and was tried and condemned to die upon the scaffold. He had but a few days to live, and his jailer awaited only the arrival of the death-warrant to lead him to execution. His friends had visited him and exchanged the last farewells,—all but one; his daughter Grizel, the pride of his house, his dearest treasure, she alone had not come to receive his last blessing!

Night had fallen on the prison, and the father sat with his head pressed against the cold, damp walls of his cell, longing for a last look of his favorite child, when the door opened, and the keeper entered, followed by a young and beautiful girl. Her person was tall and commanding, her eyes dark, bright, and tearless with a sorrow too deep to be wept away. The unhappy prisoner raised his head. "My child! my own Grizel!" he exclaimed, as he pressed her to his heart.

"My father! my dear father!" sobbed the miserable maiden.

"Your interview must be short, very short," said the jailer as he closed the door, and left them together.

"Heaven help and comfort thee, my precious child!"

said Sir John. "I had feared that I should die without bestowing my blessing on the head of my daughter, and that stung me more than death; but thou art come, my love—thou art come!—and the last blessing of thy wretched father——"

"Nay, father, forbear!" she exclaimed; "not thy last blessing! not thy last! My father shall not die!"

"Be calm, be calm, my child," he said. "Would to heaven that I could comfort thee, my own! But there is no hope; within three days thou and all my little ones will be——" fatherless, he would have said, but the word died upon his lips.

"Three days," she repeated, raising her head from his breast, but eagerly pressing his hand; "three days! then there is hope—my father shall live. Is not my grandfather the friend of Father Petre, the confessor and master of the king? From him he shall beg the life of his son, and my father shall not die."

"Nay, nay, my Grizel," he returned, "be not deceived; there is no hope. Already my doom is sealed. Already the king has signed the order for my execution, and the messenger of death is now on his way."

"Yet my father shall not—shall not die!" she repeated emphatically, and clasping her hands, "Heaven speed a daughter's purpose!" she exclaimed; and turning to her father, said calmly, "We part now, but we shall meet again."

"What do you mean, my child?" he inquired eagerly, gazing anxiously on her face.

"Ask not now," she replied, "my father, ask not now. Pray for me, and bless me, but not with thy last blessing."

He again pressed her to his heart, and wept upon her neck. In a few moments the jailer entered, and the door was closed between the father and daughter.

On the evening of the second day after this interview, a wayfaring man crossed the drawbridge at Berwick from the north, and, proceeding along Marygate, sat down to rest upon a bench, by the door of an inn on the south side of the street, nearly fronting the spot where

what was called the "main guard" then stood. He did not enter the inn, for it was above his apparent condition, being that which Oliver Cromwell had made his headquarters a few years before, and where, at a somewhat earlier period, James VI. of Scotland had taken up his residence, when on his way to England. The traveller wore a coarse jerkin, fastened round the waist by a leathern girdle, and over it a short cloak of plain material. He was evidently a young man, but his beaver was drawn down so as almost to conceal his features. In one hand he carried a small bundle, and in the other a staff. Having called for a glass of wine, he took a crust of bread from his bundle, and after resting a short time, rose to depart. Night was coming on, and a storm was threatening. The heavens grew black; the clouds rushed from the sea; sudden gusts of wind moaned through the streets, accompanied by heavy drops of rain, and the face of the Tweed was troubled.

"Heaven help thee if thou intendest to travel far in such a night as this!" said the sentinel at the English gate, as the traveller passed him to cross the bridge.

In a few minutes he was upon the wide and desolate moor of Tweedmouth; which for miles presented a desert of furze, fern, and stunted heath, with here and there a copse of thick brushwood. He slowly toiled over the steep hill, braving the storm, which now raged with the wildest fury. The rain fell in torrents, and the wind howled like a legion of famished wolves, hurling its doleful echoes over the heath. Still the stranger pushed onward, until two or three miles from Berwick, when, as if unable longer to brave the storm, he sought shelter amidst some bushes by the wayside. Nearly an hour had passed since he sought this imperfect refuge, and the darkness of the night and the storm had increased together, when the sound of a horse's feet was heard hurriedly plashing along the road. The rider bent his head to the blast. Suddenly his horse was grasped by the bridle; the rider raised his head, and the stranger stood before him holding a pistol to his breast. "Dismount!" cried the stranger, sternly.

The horseman, benumbed and fear-stricken, made an effort to reach his arms; but instantly the hand of the robber, quitting the bridle, grasped the breast of the rider, and dragged him to the ground. He fell heavily on his face, and for several minutes was senseless. The stranger seized the leather bag which contained the mail for the north, and flinging it over his shoulder, rushed across the heath.

Early on the following morning the inhabitants of Berwick were seen hurrying in groups to the spot where the robbery had been committed, but no trace of the robber could be obtained.

Three days had passed and Sir John Cochrane still lived. The mail which contained his death-warrant had been robbed, and before another order for his execution could be given, the intercession of his father, the Earl of Dundonald, with the king's confessor might be successful. Grizel now became the almost constant companion of her father. Nearly a fortnight had passed since the robbery of the mail, and protracted hope in the bosom of the prisoner became more bitter than his first despair. But even that hope, bitter as it was, perished. The intercession of his father had been unsuccessful; and a second time King James signed the death-warrant. Within little more than another day that warrant would reach the prison.

"The will of Heaven be done!" groaned the captive.

"Amen!" responded Grizel with wild vehemence, "yet my father shall not die."

Again the rider with the mail had reached the moor of Tweedmouth, and a second time he bore with him the doom of Sir John Cochrane. He spurred his horse to its utmost speed—he looked cautiously before, behind, and around, and in his right hand he carried a pistol ready to defend himself. The moon shed a ghostly light across the heath. He was turning the angle of a straggling copse when his horse reared at the report of a pistol, the fire of which seemed to flash in its very eyes. At the same moment his own pistol went off, and, his horse again rearing, he was thrown from the saddle.

In a moment the robber, with his foot upon the breast of the messenger, was bending over him and brandishing a short dagger, saying,

"Give me thine arms, or die!"

The heart of the king's servant failed him, and, without venturing a reply, he did as he was commanded.

"Now go thy way," said the robber sternly, "but leave with me thy horse and the mail, lest a worse thing come upon thee."

The man arose, and returned to Berwick, and the robber, mounting the horse, rode rapidly across the heath.

Preparations were making for the execution of Sir John Cochrane, and the officers of the law waited only for the arrival of the mail with the second death-warrant, when the news arrived that the mail had again been robbed. For yet fourteen days the prisoner's life would be prolonged. Putting his arms about his daughter, he said, "It is good. The hand of Heaven is in this!"

"Said I not," replied his child, and for the first time she wept, "said I not that my father should not die?"

The fourteen days were not past when the prison-door flew open, and the Earl of Dundonald rushed to the arms of his son. His intercession with the confessor had been successful, and, after twice signing the warrant for the execution of Sir John, the king had sealed his pardon.

He hurried with his father from the prison to his own house; his family were clinging around him, shedding tears of joy. Grizel only was absent. They were marvelling with gratitude at the mysterious providence that had twice intercepted the mail, and saved his life, when a stranger craved an audience. Sir John desired him to be admitted, and the robber entered; he was dressed in a coarse cloak, and coarser jerkin, but his bearing seemed beyond his condition. On entering, he slightly touched his beaver, but did not remove it.

"When you have read these," said he, taking two papers from his bosom, "cast them into the fire."

Sir John glanced them over—started, and became pale. They were his death-warrants.

"My deliverer!" he exclaimed; "how—how shall I thank thee—how repay the saviour of my life? My father—my children—thank him for me!"

The old earl grasped the hand of the stranger—the children embraced his knees. He pressed his hand to his face, and burst into tears.

"By what name," eagerly inquired Sir John, "shall I thank my deliverer?"

The stranger wept aloud, and raising his beaver, the raven tresses of Grizel Cochrane fell over the coarse cloak.

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed the astonished and enraptured father, "my own child,—my own Grizel!"

It is unnecessary to add more. The reader can supply the rest, and we may only add that Grizel Cochrane, whose heroism we have briefly sketched, was the grandmother of the late Sir John Stewart of Allendank in Berwickshire, and great-grandmother of Mr. Coutts, the celebrated banker. Consequently she was the great-great-great-grandmother of Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

Now that M. de Maupassant can never give to the world any more of his wonderful creations, those which he has left behind become doubly interesting. This weird and awful story, one of the most terrible which his powerful mind ever conceived, would be a wonderful thing, on account of its pictures of Alpine scenery in winter, even though it contained no plot. The combined strength and delicacy of this little plot is, however, a continual marvel. The story is translated for ROMANCE by Alma Marie Mitchell.

THE INN.

LIKE many of the wooden hotels found in the rocky crevices which abound among the white summits of the high Alps, the Inn of Schwarenbach offered refuge to any tired traveller who followed the Gemmi Pass. The Inn was open for six months, and kept by the family of Jean Hauser, but as soon as the snow began to fall, filling the valleys, and rendering the descent to Loëche impracticable, the women, the father, and the three sons departed, leaving the old guide Gaspard Hari, with the young guide Ulrich Kunsi and Sam, the big dog, to take care of the house.

The two men and the dog lived until spring in this snow prison, having before their eyes nothing but the white slopes of the Balmhorn, and surrounded by peaks buried under the same blankets of snow which almost crushed the little house, heaped on its roof, walled up its door, and blocked up its windows.

It was the day that the Hauser family was to return to Loëche—winter was approaching, and the descent would soon be dangerous. Three mules, loaded with baggage, and driven by the three sons, led the way; on a fourth rode the mother, Jeanne Hauser, and her daughter Louise; following them came the father, accompanied by the two guides, who escorted the family to the end of the pass. This made up the little procession. They passed the lake, now frozen, which lay at the foot of the rocks, extending before the Inn; then

they followed the valley, white as a winding sheet, and about which towered all the snow-clad mountains. A ray of sunlight fell across this shining and frozen desert, lighting it with a cold and blinding flame; no living thing was visible in this ocean of mountain summits, no movement in this vast immeasurable solitude, not a sound in this profound silence. Little by little, the young guide Ulrich Kunsi, a tall Swiss, with long legs, left behind him Father Hauser and old Gaspard Hari, and joined the mule on which the women rode.

The younger one saw him coming and watched him with wistful eyes. She was a little blonde; her milk-white cheeks and her very light hair looked as if they had been bleached by living in this ice and snow. When he had reached the beast upon which she was mounted, he put his hand on the crupper, and walked slowly. Mother Hauser talked to him, repeating over and over the innumerable details for the winter's work. It would be the first time he had stayed up there, whereas the old Hari had spent fourteen winters under the snow in the Inn of Schwarenbach. Ulrich Kunsi listened without noticing a word, constantly watching the young girl. From time to time he replied, "Yes, Madame Hauser," but his thoughts were far away, and his calm face was unmoved. They reached the Lake of Daube, whose long frozen surface lay at the foot of the valley. At their right the Daubenhorn rose, showing the tall black rocks which crowned its peak. As they approached the Gemmi Pass, they commenced to descend to Loëche, and all at once was opened up to them the immense horizon of the Valois Alps, which separate the large and small valleys of the Rhone. As far as one could see, white summits rose, irregular, flat, or pointed, glistening in the sunlight; the Mischabel with her two peaks, the powerful Wisschorn, the ponderous Brummeghorn, the high and pyramidal Cervin, that slayer of men, and the monstrous coquette, the Dlut-Blanche. Below them, in a deep valley, at the foot of a very steep precipice, lay Loëche. The houses looked like grains of sand, thrown into this enormous

crevice, which finishes and shuts in the Gemmi Pass, and opens below on the Rhone.

The mule stopped on the edge of the little serpentine path, which wound zigzag down the mountain-side, reaching at last the little village almost invisible at its foot.

"Good-by, and good courage till next year, my friends," said Father Hauser. Old Hari repeated, "Till next year." They embraced each other. Madame Hauser offered her cheek, and the young girl followed in her turn. When Ulrich Kunsi kissed Louise, he murmured in her ear, "Don't forget us up there," and she replied, "No," so faintly that he had to guess what she said. "Good-by," said Jean Hauser again, "keep well." He passed in front of the women, and began the descent. Soon all three had disappeared at the first turn in the road, and the two guides wended their way toward the Inn of Schwarenbach.

They walked slowly, silently, side by side, realizing fully that the summer was over, and that now for four or five months they should see only each other.

Finally Gaspard Hari began to tell some of his experiences of other winters. He had lived with Michel Canol, who was too old now to try it again, as some accident might happen during this long solitude. They were not lonely, he said. The only way to do was for each one to have his regular work, and then for amusement they played cards, or threw dice—anything to pass the time. Ulrich Kunsi listened, his eyes on the ground, and his thoughts following the little winding path which descended to the village.

Soon the Inn came in sight, a little black spot in the immense snow cloud. When they opened the door, Sam, the big curly dog, played and jumped about them.

"Come, son," said old Gaspard, "we have no women to help us now, we must get the dinner. You pare the potatoes."

Sitting down on the wooden bench, Hari began to prepare the soup.

The next morning seemed long to Ulrich Kunsi.

Old Hari smoked and spat in the hearth, while the young man looked at the glistening mountain in front of the house. In the afternoon he went out and retraced the steps of the day before, hunting for the footprints of the mule on which the two women rode—and when he reached the Gemmi Pass, he lay flat on his stomach on the edge of the precipice and looked at Loëche. The village in its rocky well was not yet buried under the snow, which was all around it. The pine forests protected it. The little houses from that distance looked like stones in a field. The young girl was there now in one of those little gray houses. In which? Ulrich Kunsi was too far away to distinguish one from the other. How he wished he could go down there, while he might. But the sun had already disappeared behind the high peak of Wildstuebel, and the young man went home. Gaspard Hari still smoked. When he saw his companion enter, he proposed a game of cards, and they seated themselves opposite each other at the table. For some time they played a game called "La Brisque;" then, having had their supper, they went to bed. The following days were like this one, clear and cold, without snow. Old Gaspard spent his afternoons hunting eagles, and other rare birds which venture up to these frozen heights, while Ulrich went regularly to look at the village in the valley. Then they again played cards, dice, dominoes, gaining or losing a little to add interest to the game.

One morning, Hari, having risen first, called his companion. A moving cloud, light as foam, surrounded them, and noiselessly buried them little by little under a mantle of froth. This lasted four days and nights. They had to break open the doors and windows, and dig a path so that they could get out of the house. The snow in twelve hours had frozen as hard as granite. They lived like prisoners, not venturing beyond their threshold. They divided their daily work. Ulrich Kunsi took the washing and housework, and also cut the wood, while Gaspard Hari did the cooking and tended the fire. These monotonous and regular occupations

were only varied by games of cards. They never quarrelled, each being calm and placid; they did not even have any sharp words, or show any temper, or grow impatient, for they had philosophically resigned themselves to the winter on the mountain-top. Once in a while old Gaspard, being the bolder of the two, went in search of chamois. Occasionally he shot one. Then there was great rejoicing in the little Inn—a festival with fresh meat.

One morning he went out. The mercury was 18 below zero—the sun had not yet risen, and the hunter hoped to find the chamois near Wildstuebel. Ulrich, remaining alone, stayed in bed till ten o'clock. He was naturally a good sleeper, but he had never dared indulge himself in his fondness for rest while the old guide set him such a good example by being very prompt. He breakfasted slowly with Sam, who passed most of his time, day and night, sleeping by the fire. Kunsi felt sad, frightened by the solitude. Seized by the desire for human companionship, he went in search of Gaspard, who should return by four o'clock. The snow had levelled all the valley, filling up the crevices, effacing the two lakes, covering the rocks. It was blinding to the eyes—a glare of ice. It was now three weeks since Ulrich had been to the precipice where he could see the village of Loëche; he wished to see it first before cutting a path toward Wildstuebel. Loëche was completely covered by snow, and the houses could not be seen at all, buried under this white mantle. He turned to the right and reached the Glacier of Loemmern, walking with the long steady strides of a mountaineer, hitting the snow with his steel-pointed staff, and looking with his strong, far-sighted eyes to discover a moving body on this immeasurable sea of ice. Reaching the end of the glacier, he stopped wondering if Gaspard had come this way, and, feeling anxious, began to run. The day was dying, the snow gradually became pink. A dry and chilling wind blew over the crystal surface. Ulrich gave a shrill and prolonged cry. His voice echoed in the death-like stillness. It ran along

over the icy billows of the glaciers, like the cry of a bird over the waves of the sea. At last it was heard no more. There was no response.

He resumed his steps. The sun had set. The crests of the mountains were still purple, though in the valley it was dark as night. The young man felt afraid. It seemed to him that the silence, the cold, the solitude of these wintry heights entered into his very soul, and would stop or freeze his blood, stiffen his body, and make him into a man of ice. He ran as fast as he could, flying toward the Inn. Gaspard must have come home during his absence. He had undoubtedly taken another route; he should surely find him seated in front of the fire, with a chamois dead at his feet.

Soon the Inn came in sight. No smoke issued from the chimney. Ulrich ran faster, and threw open the door. Sam curled about his feet to welcome him. Gaspard was not there. Alarmed, Kunsi turned around and around, as if he hoped to find his friend hidden away in some corner. Then he lighted the fire, put on the soup-pot, and waited, hoping to see the old man come in at any moment. From time to time he went to the door to watch for him. Night had fallen, the dark and gloomy night of the mountains. At the edge of the horizon a dim new moon was sinking behind the hills.

Ulrich came back, warmed his hands and feet, and thought of all the accidents which might have happened. Gaspard might have broken his leg; fallen in some ravine; made a false step and sprained his ankle; and there he was in the snow, stiff with cold, distressed, lost, crying for help with all his strength, in the awful stillness of the night. But where? The mountain was so vast, and so dangerous at this season, that it would take ten or twenty guides, walking for a week to find a man in this immense space.

Ulrich Kunsi, however, resolved to take Sam and hunt for Gaspard if by one o'clock in the morning he had not returned. For this purpose, he made all his preparations—putting in his bag food for two days, tak-

ing his hob-nailed boots, twisting about his waist a long strong rope, looking to see that his steel-pointed alpenstock, and his hatchet with which he cut steps in the ice, were in order. The fire burned brightly on the hearth, and the big dog warmed himself in the firelight. The clock, in its sonorous wooden box, ticked like the beating of one's heart. His ear was sharpened to hear any distant sound and he started when the wind rattled the roof or the door. Midnight sounded. He trembled. Feeling faint with apprehension, he put some water on the fire, so as to have some hot coffee before starting out. When the clock struck one, he got up, called Sam, opened the door and set out in the direction of Wildstuebel. For five hours he climbed, scaling the rocks, cutting the ice, always advancing, only halting occasionally when the dog hung back, at the foot of some very steep precipice. It was nearly six o'clock when he reached one of the summits where Gaspard often found the chamois—and then he waited for day to break.

The sky was pale over his head. Suddenly a gleam of light, born one could not say where, illumined the immense ocean of white peaks which surrounded him. Little by little, the most distant summits became pink, and the red sun appeared behind the heavy giants of the Bernoise Alps. Again beginning his search, like some hunter who sees the footprints of the chamois, he called to Sam, "Hunt, old fellow, hunt;" and as he descended the mountain, his restless eyes searched every crevice, and he cried shrilly, the cry dying in the awful silence.

Toward noon he seated himself in despair and ate his breakfast, giving the poor dog some food. Having finished, he again began his quest.

By the time night came he had covered fifty kilometres of the mountain; he was too far from the Inn to go home, and too tired to walk any longer, so he dug a hole in the snow, and lay down with his dog, under a cover which he had brought with him. There they rested, the man and the beast warming their bodies against each

other, and still frozen to the marrow. Ulrich could not sleep. His mind was full of visions, and his body was shaking with cold. The day was breaking when he rose, his legs stiff as iron, his mind filled with anxiety, his heart beating so loud that he imagined he heard noises all about him. Suddenly he felt as if he should die of cold in this solitude, and the horror of this thought aroused his energy and reawakened his vigor. He hurried toward the Inn, followed by Sam, limping on three legs.

It was four o'clock when they reached Schwarenbach. The house was empty and cold. Ulrich made a fire, ate, and fell asleep—so exhausted that he could not keep awake. He slept a long time—a heavy sleep. Suddenly a voice, a cry, a name, disturbed his slumbers. "Ulrich," it called. Was he dreaming? or was it one of those uncanny sounds which come to those who are losing their minds? No,—he listened intently,—this shrill cry came through his ears—and penetrated his whole being, to the very end of his nervous finger-tips. Certainly it had called him, him, "Ulrich"—it was near the house—he could no longer doubt it. Opening the door, he shouted, "Gaspard!" with all the strength of his lungs. No reply, no sound, no murmur, nothing. It was night. The wind had risen, the icy wind which leaves no living thing on these frozen, abandoned heights. It blew in gusts, more deadly and destructive than the hot winds of the desert. Ulrich called again, "Gaspard! Gaspard! Gaspard!" All remained silent on the mountain. With one bound he re-entered the Inn, shut the door, pulled in the blinds, and fell trembling on a chair, certain that his friend had called to him as his soul was leaving his body. He was as sure of this as he was that he lived and breathed. Old Gaspard Hari had suffered agony for two days and three nights out there somewhere in one of those deep ravines where the blinding white is more weird and terrible than the darkness of a cavern,—he had suffered two days and three nights, and his last thought had been of Ulrich, so his liberated soul had sought the Inn, and had called

in that mysterious and terrible way in which the souls of the dead haunt the souls of the living. It had cried its last farewell, its last reproach, its last malediction, to the man who had not hunted until he found his friend,—and Ulrich felt that it was there—near him, behind the wall, outside the door, which he had just closed. It roved and hovered about like a bird, which flutters its wings against a lighted window. The young man was filled with horror. He wanted to escape, and yet he dared not move. The spirit was ever present, day and night, while the body of the old man lay unburied in consecrated ground.

With the return of the sun Kunsi gained a little assurance. He prepared his own breakfast, and made some soup for the dog—then he sank inertly into a chair, his heart tortured at the thought of Gaspard out there in the cold. When night came, new terrors again seized him. He walked up and down the dimly-lighted kitchen, pacing from one end to the other of the room, listening for the cry which should break this silence. He felt so alone, this poor, miserable man!—more alone than any man had ever been, alone in this white desert of snow, alone two thousand metres from human beings, from the life that burns and palpitates,—alone in the frozen sky!

An insane desire filled him to go somewhere, no matter where, no matter how; to go to Loëche,—throwing himself down the abyss; but he did not even venture to open the door, certain that the other, the dead man, would block his way.

Toward midnight, weary with walking, filled with anxiety and fear, he threw himself on his chair, for he dreaded his bed, as one dreads a haunted spot. All at once, the shrill cry which he had heard the other night filled his ears. So piercing was the sound that Ulrich put his arms out to repulse the unseen form, and with such force that he fell over, chair and all. Sam, wakened by the unusual noise, began to whine, as frightened dogs whine, and turned and looked all about the Inn to see where the danger came from,—smelling under the

door, snorting and breathing very loud, his hair bristling, and his tail between his legs; he kept on growling.

Kunsi meanwhile had risen, and, holding his chair in his hand, said, "Do not enter; if you do, I will kill you" —and the dog, excited by this menace, barked furiously at the invisible enemy who defied his master's voice.

Sam little by little grew calmer, and came and lay down by the fire; but he was nervous and restless still, and growled low between his teeth. Ulrich, in his turn, regained his senses, but, feeling weak, he looked for a bottle of brandy in the buffet, and rapidly drank several glasses. His thoughts became vague, his courage left him, and a burning fever filled his veins. The next day he ate nothing, living wholly on alcohol, and for several days he remained drunk as a beast. The moment he thought of Gaspard Hari, he drank until he fell on the floor intoxicated.

When the effects of the alcohol wore off and he had digested the heating and feverish liquid, the same cry, "Ulrich!" would pierce his brain. He sat up, rose tottering, stretching out his hands for support, calling Sam to help him. The beast, which seemed to be as crazy as his master, threw himself against the door, scratching it with his paws, and gnawing it with his long white teeth, while the young man, with his head thrown back, drank the brandy at one long draught, as a thirsty man drinks water after a long race. In three weeks he had consumed all the alcohol he possessed, and this continued drunkenness only increased his fear, which grew more and more intense. The fixed idea, exaggerated by a month of idleness, grew and penetrated his very being. He walked up and down the Inn, like a wild animal in a cage—occasionally putting his ear to the door to listen if Gaspard was there, and defying him through the wall. No sooner would he fall asleep than the voice would rouse him, and he would jump with a bound to his feet. At last, one night he gained some courage—and with slow, cowardly steps he stole to the door and opened it. A blast of icy air met him, freezing his marrow, and he quickly shut

it again, and drew the bolt without noticing that Sam was outside.

Shivering, he threw some wood on the fire, and sat down to warm himself. He started,—some one had hit the door. He called out, "Go away," and a long and plaintive cry answered him. Ulrich's few remaining senses deserted him, and he was paralyzed with fear, turning around and around to find some corner in which to hide himself. The dog, wandering about outside the house, moaned constantly, and scratched with his paws the wood-work.

Ulrich lifted the heavy wooden buffet which was filled with dishes, and with superhuman force put it against the door as a barricade, and piling up everything that was left, the mattress, the chairs, the bench, he blocked up the windows as if for a siege. The dog gave long, low groans, to which the young man replied with similar sounds. Days and nights passed in this way, the one outside pawing and biting the wall, and growling low, the one inside following all his movements, his ear against the wall, and replying to his moans by dreadful inhuman cries.

At last Ulrich heard no sound, and he lay down, so exhausted that he slept. When he awoke, he could remember nothing.

. . . . . .

The long winter was over—the mountain pass was again open, and the Hauser family prepared to go up again to the little Inn.

As they approached the mountain-top, the two women on their mule talked of the two men whom they were to find there, and wondered that one of them had not come to meet them, as the pass had been open for several days. Soon they saw the house covered with snow. The doors and windows were closed. A little smoke came from the chimney, reassuring Father Hauser. But as they drew nearer, they saw on the door sill the skeleton of an animal, the flesh having been picked from the bones by some wild birds. All examined it. "It is Sam," said the mother, and she called, "Gaspard!"

A cry answered from the house, a piercing, wild cry, which sounded like the call of some tortured animal. Father Hauser repeated, "Gaspard!" Another plaintive cry like the first was heard.

The three men tried to open the door. It would not move. They got from the stable a long beam, which they used for a ram. With all their might they forced open the door. The wood cracked, the panels broke in many pieces, then a loud noise filled the house, and they discovered curled up behind the buffet a man. He had long white hair which fell on his shoulders, a shaggy white beard, and his clothes hung on his thin body in rags. No one recognized him, until Louise Hauser said, her voice trembling, "*Maman*, it is Ulrich," and they all agreed that it was he, although his hair was white. They went in, touched him, asked him questions, but he answered not a word, and they carried him to Loëche, where the doctor pronounced him insane. No one ever knew what became of old Gaspard. The little Louise died that summer of a malady which the doctor attributed to the cold air of the mountain top.

One can hardly imagine an occasion when a man might be glad to see a rattlesnake, but "An Old Miner" tells of one in the following story.

A PROVIDENTIAL RATTLESNAKE.

GAME there was none. We could not break camp now with our weak men upon our hands, and it only remained for some one to attempt the desperate journey across the San Juan range, by way of the Devil's Pass, to Animas, and return with food or a rescuing party. Failing of that, spring-time would find our cabin inhabited by corpses.

We drew lots among ourselves, therefore, we well men, to decide who should undertake this perilous trip, and the risk fell upon me. It was best, perhaps, that it should have been so, for of all the party I best knew the trail. Without waste of words or time, I prepared myself for the journey, and, thoroughly armed, early one morning, before the pale moon had fallen behind the western mountains, I bade good-by to my comrades and started. Turning my back upon the camp, I settled my course by a star, and at a brisk pace steered southward. All day I continued on the trail, ever with a watchful eye for Indian signs—for I believed our old enemies still in the vicinity—but all day unmolested, and at last, weary and worn, as the chill shadows began to creep across the great white plain behind me, I saw looming up in front the San Juan range, gashed with a narrow gorge—the Devil's Pass. Once through that horrible grave—for it was little else—and the road to Animas would be comparatively easy. My spirits rose hopefully.

As darkness came fairly down, I found myself just at the mouth of the cañon which led up to the pass, and deeming it a most sheltered place for a camping spot, I soon gathered a heap of dead limbs beneath an overhanging rock where the snow had not yet come, built a roaring fire, which warmed and cheered me, and pre-

pared for the night. I felt little fear, for the narrow, frowning cañon walls would hide the light of my fire from all the plain country. The only disturbance which I might look for would be the howling of the wolves, who might threaten, but would not dare attack me; and I cared not for them.

With these comforting reflections, therefore, I ate a hearty supper, drank a little melted snow-water, lit my pipe, and, rolling myself in my blanket, crowded close to the rock wall behind me, now well warmed by my fire. And so, in the flickering light, protected upon all sides, I gave myself unhesitatingly up to slumber.

How long I slept, I cannot say. It was deep in the night when I woke with a sudden chill. It was as if some one had touched me with a cold and clammy hand, but even before I was well awake my frontiersman's caution returned, and I opened my eyes slowly, and didn't move.

The fire was all but out, and the ghostly light from its dying embers touched the snow and rocks and trees about with a strange color like thick blood. The air was growing chill and still, too, except for the cry of a coyote far up the cañon wall opposite, who whined and barked incessantly.

There was something almost oppressive about the silence to me, when suddenly, from just beyond my smouldering fire the sound of a step startled me, and before I had time even to move there was bending over me a hideous, painful face—the face of a savage. And in his hand, already creeping toward my heart, was his heavy scalping-knife!

To describe my sensations is impossible. Some terrible spell seemed to bind me. Not only was I facing a danger which meant instant death, but I was unable to move, even in the attempt to save myself. It was as if I were fascinated.

I tried to reason with myself. This was but a single enemy—if I should spring upon him I might kill him and so be free; but although the reasoning was all right, the action I was unable to bring about, and all

the time the terrible knife drew nearer. The redskin knew that I was awake, and that I saw him, but he gloated over my helplessness and delayed his fatal blow.

At last, however, I saw the gleam of his eye, the tightening of his muscles, and knew that in an instant more all would be over, when a sudden harsh, metallic rattle sounded, as if it were in my very bosom. I felt something glide from my side—a long, scaly, snaky body shot out to meet the dusky on-coming arm. There was a blow, then a cry of horror, and, as the knife fell ringing to the earth, a rattlesnake crawled slowly away, and the Uncompahgre, with his now nerveless hand outstretched and the blood dripping from his parted fingers, with a long, wild death-shriek turned and disappeared in the darkness. The rattler which my fire had drawn from his winter quarters had saved my life and the lives of my companions.

A week later, with a party of thirty good fellows I recrossed the San Juan range and rescued my party from starvation and the Indians; and it is because of what that snake did for me in Devil's Pass, nigh on twenty years ago, that I let the critters live to-day.

A good lesson for nervous people is to be found in this amusing incident of travel, by Alex Duke Bailie.

TWO OF THEM.

EARLY in the winter of 1863, I was ordered to report at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, Mo., to assist in organizing new regiments.

It looked like snow when I left Philadelphia, and it *did* snow, worse and worse as we speeded further West. By the time we reached Terre Haute, Indiana, things looked very blue for getting on.

Anxious not to lose a chance to reach my station, I "held the fort" in the cars, the conductor assuring me that the engine and mail car would go ahead anyhow, and that I could be thus "put through."

I was awakened by the brakeman, who informed me that the conductor had gone to the hotel, leaving him to wake me and say that there was no hope of anything on wheels going out that night. My disappointment rendered me angry and unreasonable. I rose up in my wrath, and anathematized the road and all connected with it, high and low. As he advised me to stay in the cars, I determined not to do so.

I had been for some eight months at my home, recovering from an ugly wound in the face, received in our first advance against Richmond; this was not entirely healed, and my head was "in a bag,"—a large covering enclosing my face and head, leaving only the left eye and mouth visible; and this, while it appealed to the patriotic, made me a queer-looking figure.

In the baggage-car, chained to my trunk, was "Mac," my dog, a large English greyhound, a pet I had brought from home through a feeling of sentiment. Once determined to sally forth, I went to the baggage-car, untied Mac, opened my trunk, exchanged my dress overcoat for one of rough blue, drew on long boots outside my trousers, and strapped on a belt with two six-shoot-

ers in holsters. Receiving information as to the direction of the hotel from the brakeman, and calling Mac, we plunged into the storm. On, and on, and on, we blundered and stumbled, the poor dog keeping close to me and whining piteously. Suddenly I heard a noise, and, forcing my way against the wind and snow toward it, came "bang up" against the side of a house; under this partial protection I looked along and was cheered by the sight of a gleam of light which came from an open window; I quickly found the door of the house, and with Mac entered the dingy bar-room of a third-rate lager-beer saloon. It was about eleven o'clock at night; the proprietor was a rough, surly German. He stared with astonishment as we burst in upon him.

"Can I stay here to-night?"

"Naw!"

"Why not? Look here, old man, I look pretty rough, but I've got money to pay for everything I want or order," and I showed him a large roll of greenbacks. "If you can't give me a bed, make up your fire here so it will keep all night, and I'll pay you well to let me sleep on chairs in this bar-room."

"Vell," he replied, with hesitation, "I haf von room got unt in't two bed is; bud der is von man dare already."

"I don't care if there's an elephant in the one bed, so I get the other," said I. "Let's have it right off."

"Der dog, he will here shtay, eh?"

"No sir-ee, that dog goes where I do. I'll pay for him like any other Christian; put it in the bill."

With a grunt and a shrug the heavy old fellow lighted about half-an-inch of tallow candle and telling me "Come on den!" led the way out of a side-door, and up dirty, rickety stairs to what might be called the "front attic." As we passed a door on the second floor, a woman's voice called to the man. I suppose she asked him what he was doing, as he answered that he was only going to show "dis feller to bet."

The room in which he placed me was mean in every way—one strip of rag carpet in the middle; a poor bed

under each slope of the roof. He placed the candlestick on a rude shelf, and with a grunt took his departure.

I looked around—and did not like the appearance of things. I saw a lot of rough clothing piled on a broken chair by one bedside; I took the candle, and went quietly over to survey my room-mate. I was not prepossessed in his favor. He was a sallow-looking chap, with a big black beard, and tangled hair; the outlines of his figure, curled up under the blankets, seemed to indicate that he was about seven feet high, and I could see that he was feigning sleep and watching me. I determined to "bluff it through," if possible. Placing the candle again on the shelf, I unbuttoned the overcoat and drew forth my big "navies;" putting them on half-cock, I twirled the cylinder around and looked carefully into each chamber; then with a sigh of relief, and as if to say, "That's good for six shots anyhow," I laid them on the bed I was to occupy. Then I pulled the old slouch hat as far over my ears as possible, turned down the blankets, and, with boots, overcoat, and hat on, turned into the bed. The pistols I placed one on each side of me; the knife I laid under my back. I wakened Mac, who, totally exhausted, was asleep on the floor; made him jump in and lie down close to me, and then pulled the blankets over us both. I quickly dropped into a half-sleep. A movement from the other creaky bed awakened me. I opened my eyes, and by the dull snow light which straggled through the single window could see the outlines of the man in the other bed, and he was sitting up.

In an instant I was on the alert, but made no movement. He leaned forward and seemed to listen; then he dropped down again. In about five minutes he once more raised himself, and for a time was motionless; then one leg was put outside the cover; then the other, and he stood erect. With the utmost caution he invested his long legs in their proper garments, and then, gathering up his other clothing and boots in his arms, he stole quietly as a robber out of the room.

I heard him descend the stairs and knock lightly on

the door of the landlord's chamber; several times he knocked; then the door was opened, and I could hear the dull muttering of the big German, the shrill whispers of a woman, and earnest, though low tones which must be those of the stranger. Then the two men went down into the bar-room, and I decided that I was "in for it." I crept out of bed and went to the door,—no lock or catch was there. I looked for something to brace against it; nothing could be found. One of the two chairs had only three legs, and neither had any back. I was caught in a trap.

I had fought my way through every grade, from private to captain, in the field, and done every line of duty from picket to pitched battle, but I never had such trying hours as I passed in that bed. I could recognize the shuffling of stocking-shod feet on the first floor, and could hear a steady conversation for about fifteen minutes. Then all was quiet for a time. Next I heard a heavy but cautious tread ascending to the landlord's room, and the woman's whispers were renewed.

The garret-room door was open just a crack. There I fastened my gaze. To that point I directed the barrels of my pistols. I heard the stairs creak, and the wind howl.

I watched, and waited and finally—I fell asleep. When I woke, Mac was licking my face and broad daylight was streaming through the window; my pistols lay where they had fallen from my hands. I felt in my pockets; there was my money all right. Quickly I made my way downstairs. In the bar-room, which seemed rather cozy by morning view, was the host, who now looked an honest, sturdy fellow. "Can I have breakfast for myself and dog?"

"Well, I guess so, after a bit."

And all the time he was eying me most curiously. I took a seat by the hot stove; he came and rattled it a little with the poker, and at last said:

"Say, vat mit dat other feller you do, lasht night, dot you so moch him skeer?"

"Do!" said I. "I didn't do anything, and as to

'skeer,' I'll bet a horse he wasn't half as much skeered as I was; the thundering big border ruffian!"

"By Shimminy! dot a good one was. He comes down all mit der drimbils, und vakes mine wife und she myself vakes, und he say to me, 'Wot fer you sent to mine pet room op dot feller mit a vite mask his face on, unt ton pishtols unt dot pig ploothoun dog? I shtay not der room in mit no such ploothoun' unt murterin' cudtrote.' I haf de shairs in de kitchen for him fix, unt he at de daylight leaf mitout his breakfast what for he de last night paid."

In spite of its very tame, though decidedly satisfactory, ending, that was as trying a night as ever I passed in my life.

This beautiful and thrilling story by Jules Sandeau has been translated for ROMANCE by Virginia M. Sherry. After a fashion more common in France than here, it is dedicated by the author to his sister in a few affectionate lines, which have, however, no reference to the subject of the tale.

A SOLDIER OF BRITTANY.

It was in the country, near the forest not far from the Seine, in the modest villa where I hoped to spend my old age, that I saw Jean de Thommeray for the first time. He was scarcely twenty-two. Some pages signed with my name had won his heart to me, and he presented himself with no other recommendation than his good appearance and his desire to know me. The sympathy of the young has an irresistible attraction. It is very sweet to be able to draw them when one is approaching the autumn of life. I was the more willing to give him a welcome that I could do so without any effort, for he was really charming. I see him now as he stood at my gate, a slender, noble-looking fellow, his face shadowed with the down of youth; straight nose, blue eyes, fair forehead; his hair, fine and of an ashy blonde, waved above the temples. His ease of manner and language, the elegant simplicity that showed in his dress, everything, reflected credit on the fireside by which he had grown up.

It was a clear April day; we walked together in the woods of Meudon. Though many years divided us, we conversed like two friends. He had generous impulses, holy illusions, all the happy and ardent feelings of his age. He believed in the good, he admired the beautiful, he dreamed of love and glory. Where did he come from? In what latitude was he born? What star had shone over his cradle? Who and what was this Jean de Thommeray, who at the end of an hour's talk had spoken neither of women, nor of horses, nor yet of his friends' incomes?

Thanks to the confidences he gave me without my asking, I soon found out all about him. His father, who came of a good old Breton family, had studied in Paris in the days when patriotism and liberty ranked as high as letters and arts among the young men of modern ideas. The Breton gentleman felt the influences of this awakening in the flood of thought, and, without giving up the traditions of honor in his family, he set sail with the current. He loved, with a pure, delicate, romantic love, a poor young girl of good family, of Irish descent, and married her. When his studies ended, he went back to Brittany. The hereditary domain that sheltered their tenderness was in one of the wild and quiet valleys of Old Armorica. It consisted of a farm and manor or castle, which was protected by an oak grove from the winds that swept across the valley from the mountains. Here Monsieur de Thommeray lived, like his forefathers, the life of a country gentleman, hunting, riding horseback, visiting his neighbors, improving his land: while his wife "la belle Irlandaise," as they called her, gave herself up to domestic affairs and governed her household with grace and authority. Though he had taken root in this primitive life, he was faithful to the tastes and inclinations of his youthful days. He never went beyond the circle of his remembrances, and for him nothing beyond them seemed to exist. Time, which never stops, seemed to have forgotten him on the way. It was a happy family, —he, his wife, and his three sons. The elder and the second son showed no taste for study or literature, but Jean, the little one, more delicate than his brothers, grew up under his mother's gentle wing with a strong sense of the beauties and harmonies of creation and a love of books. While his brothers walked and rode over the farm and led a hardy, rustic life, Jean read, dreamed, or composed little Breton poems that his mother proudly compared to Moore's Irish Melodies, and that excited the admiration of his father. His brothers, too, were proud of his gifts and his charming ways, and even of his weakness when a little fellow, for that seemed to

claim their protection. But one morning, not long before the time I first met him, Jean embraced them all and set out for Paris, filled with the same illusions that his father had had before him.

Two or three years passed. I did not know what had become of Jean. I supposed that he must have left Paris, and that he was living peacefully in his father's home. He had evidently forgotten me. I was not surprised at that. As for me, I thought of him from time to time. A journey I made into Brittany revived in my heart the memory of my young friend, when I learned one day that I was only a few leagues from the Manor of Thommeray. I arrived at nightfall at the house I loved to think of as the asylum of happiness. I found the family assembled, and, not seeing Jean, naturally I asked for him. M. de Thommeray answered me briefly. "Monsieur," he said, "we have only two sons now,—these whom you see. We never speak of the one we have lost."

Was Jean dead? No; the attitude of M. de Thommeray, his voice, his language, and his gesture were not those of a father who has buried his son. During my visit his mother found an opportunity of speaking to me alone. She told of her son and of the sorrow he had brought upon them,—how he had compromised himself, falling lower and lower from day to day, in the wicked world of Paris, and how his family no longer looked upon him as their own. She made me promise to go to see him, to write to her and to let her know how he lived, to hide nothing from her. Could this be the same Jean de Thommeray whom I had known? How could he have fallen so low from the heights where I had left him?

I went back to Paris. I found him living in richly-furnished apartments, and he held out his hand to me with an easy grace, as if he had not a pang in the world,—as if the luxury, in the midst of which I had surprised him, had been bought by the efforts of a glorious and honest labor, instead of the fruits of the gaming-table. He began to excuse himself for having so long neglected me.

"All that is excused," I said. "I have come from Brittany where I saw your parents, and as you have always spoken of them with respect, I am only fulfilling a duty when I come to tell you of the sad state in which I found them——"

"Thanks, monsieur, you need not go on." He interrupted me calmly and with a tone of great urbanity. "It is nothing new that you tell me. My way of living is a subject of scandal and trouble to my family. My brothers disown me, my mother weeps in secret, my father no longer knows me. Well, sir, be my judge. I am not a saint. Not being able to reform the age as once I thought of doing, you remember, I have ended by adopting its ways and wearing its livery. It seems to me that, in a society where money is a god, not to be rich would be an impiety. I have played, I do not deny it, and I have always won. By my skilful playing I keep up the state of the house and belongings I won by my luck. My parents lived according to the manners of their time. I live according to the ways of my own."

It was sad to hear this young man exult in his fall and glory in his ruin. All about him betrayed the habits of the life he now led. His very smile, once so sweet and clear, had a cold expression like the hard lustre of steel. He told me his story,—how he had been basely deceived and robbed of his last centime by a woman whom he thought deserving of his heart's devotion, in spite of his mother's penetration, which had sounded the depths of unworthiness in the character hidden beneath the charms of beauty and an artless manner; how, when he came to his senses, his youth was dead, and a new and a worse man had come to life within him. He believed no more in anything good.

"There are no longer any women!" he said.

"You are mistaken," I replied. "We have mothers, sisters, friends, wives, who every day and every hour quietly accomplish miracles of goodness, devotion and charity. Society is not as bad as you think it, but you, you, sir, are much worse than I feared. Still, why not

return to your family, who are grieving for you? Your youth is not dead, it is waiting for you there."

"It is too late! I must confess to you that since my sojourn at Baden the gambling-fever has never left me. Let us live and enjoy ourselves—after us the deluge! It is now my hour for the *bourse*, and to my regret I am obliged to leave you."

"One word more," I said, rising. "Until now you have been successful; but fortune will not always be on your side. What will you do when she betrays you? For that day will surely come."

"Let it come. I am ready!"

"You will kill yourself," I said. He did not answer. "And God?—and your mother?" After a moment's hesitation, he held out his hand. I took it.

"You have fallen low indeed, my boy. This explains the sorrow of your family. I understand it, and I share it. But, even now, I do not give you up——" He smiled sadly, and I left him.

A few days after this I wrote to Madame de Thommeray and gave an account of my interview with Jean. I did not try to see him again. Other thoughts occupied me. War was declared. The enemy was already marching on Paris; the world was filled with the noise of our disasters.

Whoever did not see Paris during the last days of the siege cannot form an idea of the physiognomy of the city at that time. The confusion and flight brought on by the first news of our defeat gave way to manly thoughts and noble resolves. Every one was ready for great sacrifices. A current of heroism ran through all hearts. Men watched on the ramparts; citizens, transformed into soldiers, drilled in the squares and gardens with their muskets and rifles; all classes mingled and fused together, forming only one soul—the soul of their country. I lived in the streets during those feverish days, attracted by every noise, mingling in the crowd, gathering all the news. One morning on the quai Voltaire, between the Pont-Royal and the Bridge des Saints-Pères, I met Jean, face to face.

"At last!" I said, greeting him. "And you have stayed? I am glad."

"Yes, I have stayed here," he replied. "I was obliged to look after my fortune. Now it is all arranged. I have drawn out all my money, and I leave this evening to go and live in a foreign land."

"You are going away!" I exclaimed. "When your country is in agony, you think of leaving her?"

"My country, monsieur! The wise man carries his country wherever he goes. You, yourself, what are you doing here?"

"I have not returned only to go away again. I am not worth much; but here I have known good and bad days. Paris has given me whatever good I have in me. I wish to share her dangers, if only by my presence. I will live in her emotions, I will help to bear her anguish, and if we must suffer hunger, I shall have the honor of suffering with her! But you, Jean de Thommeray! But you! I knew you were changed for the worse, but I did not think you were fallen so low. The land is invaded—and you, a young man, instead of seizing a musket, catch hold of your pocket-book! The fortunes of France are on the verge of ruin, and you have no other care than to realize your future. To-morrow the enemy will beat our gates, and you strap up your valise and fly like a coward! It was not enough to have plunged your family into mourning and despair. You must inflict this shame, too, upon them!"

A quick blush rose to his forehead. A light shone in his eyes.

"Pardon, monsieur, pardon. These are very grand words, it seems to me. You are too young and I am too old for us to understand each other. I am not running away. I am *going* away. There is nothing here to keep me. Paris does not interest me. It is only just that she should be punished. As for my family, they are safe enough from the dangers of war, and I do not see why I should be forbidden to seek for myself, in Brussels, or in London or Florence, the peace and security they enjoy in Brittany."

My heart was sick and disgusted. I turned away, when suddenly Jean started with surprise. "Listen!" he said. I listened, and heard a strange music, the tones of which, vague at first and indistinct, grew louder and seemed to be coming toward us. I looked, too, as I listened. I saw beyond the bridge of Solferino an immense crowd, who came on singing. It was a slow, grave chant, almost religious, and had nothing in common with the bursts of song to which we were accustomed. Jean leaned against the parapet. I saw that he was very pale. In the mean time, the confused mass approached nearer and nearer, and became less and less confused. Now I recognized the *chant de la Bretagne* and the sound of the *binion:* the *gardes mobiles* of Finisterre were entering Paris. The tuft of ermine in their military caps, the gray cloth uniforms, the knapsack strapped behind, tell all about them as they advance with a correct and firm step, marching by platoons and filling the whole width of the *quai*. At their head on horseback rides the chief of the battalion; behind him, the chaplain and two lieutenants. The head of the column is now only a few steps from us. It is my turn to be startled. I look at Jean. His hand falls upon mine. "My father! My two brothers!" he says in a low voice. And he sees passing before him, under their most striking forms, the eternal truths that he has so long disowned or forgotten,—God, country, duty and family! The long pageant of his honest and noble days defiles before him singing as the troops go by. I give him the last blow. On one of the balconies of the *quai*, I have just seen his mother.

"You unfortunate fellow!" I exclaim. "You said there were no longer any women. Look, there is one; do you recognize her?"

Madame de Thommeray waves her handkerchief, the Breton chant redoubles in fervor, and the chief of the battalion, with the courtesy of a knightly gentleman, bows in his saddle and salutes her with his sword. Mute and motionless, with sad eyes and dry eyelids, Jean seems turned to stone. I leave him to the mercy of God.

The next day, in the courtyard of the Louvre, the Commandant de Thommeray called the roll of his battalion. The call finished, he passed down the ranks, when a soldier stepped out and said:

"Commandant, one of your men was forgotten."

"What is your name?"

"My name is Jean," answered the volunteer, lowering his eyes.

"Who are you?"

"A man who has lived badly."

"What do you wish?"

"To die well."

"Are you rich or poor?"

"Yesterday I possessed an ill-gotten fortune. I have resigned it voluntarily. I have now only my musket and my knapsack."

"That is well." And with a gesture he ordered the young man to return to the ranks. There was a long silence. The Commandant had again taken his place in front of the battalion. "Jean de Thommeray!" he called out. A manly voice answered: "*Present!*"

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Vol. XI. OCTOBER, 1893. No. 3.

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A GRIZZLY BEAR HUNT.

ON my first overland journey to California, in 1851, we made camp one evening among the foothills on the southeastern slope of Book Mountain.

As no Indians had troubled us, nor "sign" been seen for the preceding six days, we somewhat relaxed our accustomed vigilance on this occasion. The ten wagons were corralled as usual, but, instead of being confined within the enclosure after nightfall, our horses and mules were merely hobbled and allowed to graze at will on the rich buffalo grass of a little valley, lying between two adjacent hills.

Among the stock was a valuable thoroughbred mare, belonging to Sam Tount, our guide. During the journey this animal had brought forth a foal, a lovely little thing, now two weeks old, the especial pride of its owner and the pet of the whole party. As the youngster's sire was a famous Kentucky racer, Sam set great store by it and would not have parted with it for its weight in—well, perhaps not gold, but certainly in silver.

The colt, of course, was not shackled in any way, and when last seen was playfully gambolling about its mother, as she fed.

In order to reach this particular camping-place, we had that day made an exceptionally long march and every man of us was unusually tired. So, believing that no danger of any kind threatened, we did not post sentries at all, but retired early to our wagon-beds for a good sleep.

The night passed quietly, and nothing occurred to disturb our slumbers until just at daybreak in the morning. Then all were suddenly awakened by a confused,

thunderous trampling, blended with the noise of clashing metal.

"Indians! Indians!" some one shouted, as, grasping our ready weapons, we tumbled out to the ground.

"Indians nothing," said the guide, "if 'twas, you'd never've had a chance to say so. The reds don't gen-'rally wake folks up that way. Why, thunder alive! boys, it's a stampede of the cattle; see them come!"

Sure enough, in the gray light of dawn we now saw, only a few yards from the corral, the whole drove of horses and mules clattering painfully along, apparently in frantic efforts to escape some impending peril. A perfect picture of terrified rage, Tount's mare led the van; but the precious colt was nowhere to be seen.

"Here, Flora, here. What's the matter, old girl?" soothingly called Sam, stepping out from the enclosure.

In response to the well-known voice, the beautiful creature limped up to her master's side and, distressfully whinneying, rubbed her nose against his cheek, while her great, frightened eyes seemed, plainly as articulate speech, to appeal for help.

"Boys!" excitedly shouted Sam, "something's happened to the colt. Come along, half a dozen of you, quick! The others must stick to the corral, for it's just possible the cattle may have scented Indians."

I and five others, who happened to be fully dressed, instantly started off with our leader, hoping to find that the foal had merely been left behind by the herd, scared, perhaps, by a prowling wolf or two. The little dell, where the stock had been feeding, was about four hundred yards from camp.

On arriving there, we could at first see no signs of the colt, but presently, as the light broadened into day, Tount, who was scouring the outer edge of the valley, uttered a startled cry.

Hurrying up to him, we saw a small pool of blood on a spot of grassless ground, in the shade of a great boulder, and, right in the middle of the patch so moistened, the enormous footprints of a bear!

"My little beauty's gone, boys—killed and carried off

by a grizzly," moaned Sam; "see where the brute's dragged it away to the hills."

There could be no doubt of the fact; for a broad trail of crushed grass, flecked by occasional spots of blood, led directly toward the mountain, though in some places the powerful monster had evidently borne his prey clear of the ground altogether.

Sam was furious. "Boys, we'll kill that old devil if we have to stay here a week," he savagely said, "but I guess we can do it this forenoon. You can see by the looks of the blood that he's not been gone long. What do you say—shall we go on now, or return to camp and get breakfast first?"

"Best take a square meal to begin on, Sam. The job may take longer than you think. Besides, the other fellows will want to know what's up," replied one of our men.

"That's so," assented Tount, and we went back to the corral.

After a hasty breakfast, the same six of us, all young men under twenty-seven and fully armed, left camp with the guide, determined, if possible, to avenge his loss and enjoy the fun (?) of killing a grizzly—none of the seven, barring Sam Tount and myself, having ever had the chance of coming to close quarters with that formidable beast.

At the time I write of, breech-loading guns had not come into general use, but each one of us carried a good muzzle-loading rifle, a heavy Colt's revolver and the indispensable hunting-knife.

At once picking up the bear's trail, we followed it easily so long as it kept to a grass or soil-covered formation, but after that, when it entered a rocky, mountainous region, we had nothing to guide us except the occasional displacement of a loose stone or, perhaps, the frayed edge of a stunted shrub—no blood drops being now visible.

"The old villain has made straight for his lair, likely in some deep canyon," observed Tount, after we had gone up and down the broken ranges for over a mile.

By and by the trail came out upon a plateau of smooth, soilless rock, and here we lost it. Our guide, however, was an old bear-hunter, and knew the country well.

"We'll separate soon, boys," he said. "A little way to the west of this height there's two ugly, black ravines. They lie end on to the plateau and that murdering old thief has gone into one of them, sure. Four of you best take the one to the left, and I, with two men, will hunt that to the right.

"But, mind! you've got no fool black bear to deal with? These old grizzlies are cunning as Satan himself. This one's a whopper, and he'll likely see, or scent, or hear you before you catch a sight of him. Maybe he'll run—they mostly do—and then again, maybe he won't. He's chock full—blast him! and's just as apt to lie low till you run right on him as to do anything else.

"Now, boys," (impressively) "don't take any chances. Never turn a big rock nor go into a patch of scrub without having your eyes peeled and your guns to the front, ready to fire; and, above all, don't *wound* the brute. Shoot to kill—square for the brain. He'd mow down the whole lot of us with half-a-dozen holes in his heart before he'd keel over.

"If you should be unlucky enough to wound him at the first volley, don't budge an inch, unless there's a safe rock handy, but draw your revolvers and stand cool and steady till he's within ten feet. Then drive every shot into his head."

By the time Sam had finished this, for him, long speech, we had crossed the plateau and could see, beyond its western, steeply-descending slope, the mouths of two wild-looking canyons, lying a half mile apart and separated by a lofty ridge of rock.

"Now, who's coming with me?" asked Sam.

Charlie Grant, a young fellow of nineteen, and I ranged ourselves by his side, and the two parties took diverging lines.

When we three came to the brow of the descent, overlooking the ravine to the north, we saw at once that we

had chanced upon the right one, for among the dwarfed bushes growing on the slope was a distinct trail, down which the bear had unmistakably scrambled with his prey.

"Better call the other fellows over, Tount," I suggested in a whisper. "They'll want to see the fun."

"They couldn't hear us, even if it would do to yell now, and shooting's out of the question," he answered in the same low tone. "Let them go on. Like as not they'll run on to another grizzly. The brutes are noways scarce round here,"—which last observation greatly delighted Charlie, who, in his ignorance, would have tackled a grizzly bear or a mountain lion single-handed.

On clambering down to the ravine, we found it to be a frightfully gloomy place, encumbered by jagged rocks and loose boulders and everywhere overgrown with aspen bushes, thorns and briars; but along its bottom ran a deeply-indented, tortuous path, evidently trodden out by the constant passing and repassing of wild beasts.

Restraining our impetuous young friend by signs, we made our way silently and with extreme caution along this path, the guide, with his rifle so held as to be instantly available, taking the lead. We had gone, however, scarce three hundred yards, when he suddenly stopped and, with a beckoning motion of one hand, called us up.

On coming alongside, we saw, on an open spot by a little spring, the half-consumed remains of the unfortunate colt. Obviously its epicurean slayer had reserved his breakfast until he could enjoy with it a cooling drink!

In all my experience I have never known, in any country, a braver and more hardy man than Sam Tount; but now, as he gazed ruefully upon the mangled form at his feet, two great tears rolled down his cheeks. Then the fierce battle-light flashed once more in his eyes, and he huskily whispered:

"That cursed brute's eaten his fill and has gone off somewhere to sleep. I'll never give up this hunt till I've seen him lying dead."

Now, one by one, while the others stood guard, we knelt by the spring and quenched our thirst; then we resumed our careful advance, for here and there, where the path was dusty, we could still see tracks of the bear.

So, with never-relaxing vigilance on Sam's part, we went on until the ravine led out to the edge of a broad, matted and seemingly impenetrable wilderness of densely-growing vines, bushes and thorns. Here all traces of our quarry were lost. Look as we might, we could see no spot where a beast so huge could possibly have entered.

"This must be 'Deadman's Grove,'" said Tount, speaking aloud now. "In the summer of '49 I and two chums, returning from California, went into it from the west side—there's three openings there—and only one of us ever came out. An old she-grizzly killed my comrades after they'd both shot her behind the shoulder, before I'd come up. But," he grimly added, "she got my bullet through her brain in less than a minute afterwards. It was a mighty dear hunt to me, for besides the loss of my partners, I found, after burying them under a heap of stones, that a big Brazilian diamond, which I'd put most all my wealth into, was missing."

"But, Sam," I asked, "what in the world's become of *our* bear?"

"He's sneaked round through the rocks to the north, and gone in on 'tother side. We'll have to do the same, for a cat couldn't get in here. It's not more'n a mile, I reckon."

Sam, as usual, proved to be right; for while we were skirting the northern boundary of the grove, we several times came upon the same old gigantic footprints.

Turning to the left on reaching the northwest corner of the grove, we found close at hand a well-defined opening.

"No use bothering with that," carelessly said Tount, "the cunning brute's sure to have gone into the far one, close to the ridge. It's only a couple of hundred yards away. And, boys, if you ever kept your eyes

skinned and your ears open, do it now. That trail's the one where my poor chums passed in their checks."

"Let me go in alone, Sam. I don't care a cent for the grizzly. His head's a big mark. Down in old Ohio, I've often barked a red squirrel in the top of a tall hickory, and I couldn't miss him," impulsively cried Charlie Grant.

The guide glanced pityingly at the boy, but merely said, "You'll be older bimeby, Charlie"; and, relapsing once more into dead silence, we passed the middle opening and entered the mouth of that one nearest the ridge.

'Twas a horrible place, strangely dark, noisome and oppressively hot; while all about were strewn shapeless masses of rock, interlaced and half-hidden by creeping vines, giant cacti and poison ivy—a fit abode for noxious reptiles and beasts. But it was possible for two men to walk abreast on the path, and, distrusting Charlie's prudence, I took my place by Tount's side.

Amid an awful silence, we crept slowly on, scanning each gloomy recess and tangled brake with such care as men whose lives were at stake might well exercise. The ground beneath our feet, beaten into soft dust by innumerable tracks, returned no echo to our cautious footsteps, nor was there a breath of wind to bear the scent of our bodies to any lurking creature.

We had thus stolen along for nearly a quarter-of-a-mile, when my companion stopped, quietly nudged me, and stood intently gazing, through a sort of aisle in the matted vines, at something as yet unseen by me. But presently, noting the direction of his eyes, I saw, lying on a flat rock of nearly identical color, a yellowish gray mass of fur.

Putting his mouth close to my ear, Sam whispered: "It's the big grizzly! He's fast asleep. That's his back we see. His head's completely hidden. We must get a sight of it somehow."

While the old hunter stood considering, I hardly dared to breathe, and I could feel young Grant, close behind me, trembling with excitement.

Sam's indecision lasted only for a moment, however; then he stooped, picked up a small stone and deliberately pitched it on top of the sleeping monster, not thirty feet from us!

Yawning, and stretching himself, as if disturbed by a fly, the brute slowly rose, his tremendous bulk looming up above the surrounding bushes; but his head was yet invisible. Very evidently he had not seen us, and was about to lie down again, when Tount gave a low whistle. The effect was instantaneous. The bear stiffened into an attitude of watchful attention and, raising his huge head, suspiciously sniffed the air.

'Twas the last breath he ever drew! Coolly, as if shooting at a rabbit, Sam threw up his rifle and touched the trigger. The heavy, pointed slug struck squarely at the base of the bear's ear, and, without a sound, he sank shiveringly down, stone dead!

Then Charlie Grant went wild. Whooping and yelling like a Comanche, he dashed through the thicket, sprang upon the rock and fairly danced on the carcass of our prize.

The pelt, at no time very valuable, was not, at this season, worth removing; so, after eating some lunch, brought with us, we began to retrace our steps, Charlie, no longer restrained of his freedom, prancing on ahead.

"Best be careful," cautioned Tount, as the boy dodged behind a rock, "that's not the only bear in—Heavens! what's that?" for, overlapping the last word, came a smothered cry and the sound of a fall.

Darting round the rock, we found our young comrade lying senseless on the ground and, just beyond him, saw the retreating form of a half-grown grizzly! No chance for a head shot now, but with lightning-like quickness we both fired at the centre of the animal's back. One lucky bullet broke his spine, and with a hoarse, gurgling grunt he fell helpless in his tracks, to be next instant despatched by two pistol shots through the brain. Then we turned to Charlie, fearing the worst.

The youth had been merely stunned, however, by a heavy blow upon his left shoulder, the flesh of which

was bruised and slightly torn, but no bones were broken, and in a few minutes he revived.

"I'm some 'older' now, Sam," he said as soon as he was able to speak. "I never saw that brute at all, and didn't know what struck me."

"You've had a wonderful escape, boy," rejoined Tount. "If that had been a full-grown bear, you'd have been killed dead as a door-nail. Here, let me fix a sling for your arm; it'll be sort o' sore for a while."

"This fun's kind o' different from popping red squirrels; isn't it?" thoughtfully observed Charlie.

"Rather," laughed Sam, "but come along now. I'll show you fellows where my old partners lie."

Turning at a right angle from the main trail, we forced our way for about sixty yards through a maze of rank vegetation, and then, in a comparatively clear spot, came to a great cairn of stones.

"Here's where I buried my poor chums, and I see that everything's just as I left it. I was some afraid that the bears would pull down the pile," gravely said Tount.

Then he began to tell us all about the catastrophe.

While he was doing so, Charlie, a little faint perhaps from his hurt, sat down and was meditatively poking the ground with his wiping-stick, when something caught his eye and, leaning forward, he drew from the black soil a minute roll of rubber cloth.

"What's this?" he idly asked, holding it up.

Sam gave one glance at the little package, then a mighty shout of joy, and hastily unrolling the partially rotted rubber, showed us a great, uncut diamond, worth, he said, all of and more than the three thousand and two hundred dollars he had paid for it!

Naturally, the good fellow felt hugely elated by the strange, but, under the circumstances, easily accounted for, finding of his long lost treasure.

Over and over again, he shook hands with us, while to the fortunate finder he presently said:

"You've done the best day's work of your life, Charlie! I'll sell this pesky thing when we get to

'Frisco, and whack up with you, share and share alike" —and so, despite the boy's protestations, he ultimately did, though obliged to send the stone to New York in order to realize its full value.

Twenty years afterwards, in 1871, a much more remarkable, though less important, recovery of lost property occurred to myself. I was engaged in silver mining in Colorado at the time, and resided at the lower end of Georgetown, just opposite Stewart's reducing works, since burned, I believe.

One day I lost, with no idea where, a unique and highly prized scarf-pin. Two months thereafter my wife and youngest son, quite a little fellow, came from the East to join me.

On the afternoon of their arrival the child was sent to the business part of the town on some errand. While tramping along the thoroughfare, daily traversed by hundreds of men, vehicles and animals, he kicked up out of the deep dust under foot the identical pin, untarnished and uninjured! an extraordinary find indeed, and one, probably, which no amount of intentional searching or offered reward would have brought about.

The following story will be of especial interest to students of natural history. It is said to be true by its authors, Messrs. Erckmann and Chatrian. Julia de Kay has translated it for ROMANCE.

THE CRAB SPIDER.

THE Hot Springs of Spinbronn, situated in the Hundsrück, a few miles from Pirmasens, enjoyed many years ago a great reputation. Sufferers from gout, from all parts of Germany, gathered there, undeterred by the wildness of the scenery and the lack of the comforts of more civilized places. They lived in the picturesque little cottages that nestled in the valley; they bathed in the waters, which fell in great foamy masses from the top of the rocks; they drank five or six glasses of mineral water a day; and the local doctor, Daniel Haselnoss, who went his daily rounds in full-bottomed wig and claret-colored coat, was rapidly making his fortune.

Now, alas! the waters of Spinbronn are no longer "on the list," and in this unfortunate village are to be seen only a few charcoal-burners; saddest of all, Dr. Haselnoss himself has departed. All this is the result of the following strange concatenation of circumstances:

The cataract of Spinbronn takes its source from a cavern, at the top of the rocks, about five feet high and twelve or fifteen wide. The water is salt and very warm. Of the cavern itself, covered outside with mosses, climbing plants, and bushes, no one had been able to discover the depth, as the hot steam arising from its mouth prevents any one from entering. It had been observed that certain birds, hawks, wood-pigeons and partridges were drawn in as they flew over it and never appeared again. No one could solve this mystery.

In 1801, when the season was at its height, the stream became suddenly much swollen from no apparent

cause, and the bathers were one day horrified to behold a human skeleton, white as snow, borne toward them over the falls. The alarm was great. Every one supposed that a murder had been committed and the victim had been thrown into the cavern at the head of the fall. The skeleton weighed only twelve pounds, and Dr. Haselnoss declared that it must have lain several centuries in the sand, to have been so reduced in size. This plausible explanation did not prevent a stampede —many persons, disgusted at the idea of the kind of water that they had been drinking, departed the same night. The real invalids, however, made the best of it and remained. The overflow still continued, exposing to view all the horrors of the cavern—mud, slime, skeletons of all kinds of animals, beasts, birds and reptiles.

Dr. Haselnoss wrote a treatise in which he proved that all these remains were antediluvian; that these fossilized bones had accumulated there during the Flood—that is, four thousand years before Christ; and that therefore they must be considered as stones, and in no way disgusting or detrimental to health. Hardly had he succeeded in calming and convincing his patients, when one morning the bodies of a fox and of a hawk, with his feathers untouched, came sailing over the fall.

"He can't say these bodies are antediluvian," cried the guests, and packed their trunks and took their departure.

"What an outrage!" cried the ladies. "How utterly dreadful! Perhaps it is this horror that gave the waters their power. Better die of gout than take such a remedy."

Finally, Spinbronn was completely deserted, save by a big Englishman, crippled with gout in feet and hands, who called himself Sir Thomas Howerbrick, Commodore, and who made himself very important, as do most Englishmen in a foreign country. Big, fat, and rosy-cheeked, his hands literally knotted by the gout, he would have been willing to drink skeleton broth if it

would have cured him of his ailments. He laughed loudly at the stampede of the other guests, installed himself in the most commodious of the cottages, and declared his intention of remaining all winter.

Just before the Revolution of 1789 a young doctor from Pirmasens, named Christian Weber, had gone to St. Domingo to make his fortune. He had accumulated 100,000 pounds when the negro insurrection broke out there. Most of the whites were massacred, but Dr. Weber had the good fortune to escape, and to save a portion of his fortune. He travelled awhile in South America, and went to French Guiana. In 1801 he returned to his native town and established himself at Spinbronn, Dr. Haselnoss ceding to him his house and his almost defunct practice. Weber had brought home with him an old negress called Agatha, a hideous creature, with a flat nose and protruding lips as big as a man's fist. She wore a triple bandanna of brilliant colors, arranged like a tiara. The poor old woman loved to deck herself in red garments, and her great earrings fell on her shoulders. The peasants came from miles around to gaze at her. Dr. Weber was a large, solemn-looking man, always arrayed in dress-coat and small-clothes. He wore a broad straw hat, and high boots, from the tops of which hung silver tassels. He talked little and his laugh sounded somewhat forced and nervous; his gray eyes, ordinarily calm and meditative, sparkled ominously at the least contradiction. Every morning he went for a solitary ride, letting his horse take his own way, while he whistled continuously a monotonous tune, a weird negro melody.

He had brought with him from Hayti many boxes of strange insects, some black and gold, as large as eggs; others small and as brilliant as sparks. He seemed to be much more interested in them than in his patients. Often, returning from his rides, the broad brim of his hat would be decorated with butterflies and beetles.

His grounds were full of strange fowls,—Barbary geese, with their scarlet cheeks, African hens and a

white peacock, that shared with the old negress the awed admiration of the simple mountaineers.

The doctor had naturally become somewhat intimate with Sir Thomas, as in him was represented most of his paying practice, and many and long were the conversations they held together, comparing notes on their many adventures in foreign lands. Somehow it began to be whispered about that Dr. Weber was a dabbler in the occult sciences. He certainly had a most singular power over the old negress. Ordinarily of a gay and merry nature, amused at the merest trifle, she trembled and grew pale if she felt her master's eyes resting upon her.

In the mean time the same mysterious disappearance of birds in the cavern continued. The phenomenon was as inexplicable as ever.

Just after the flight of the visitors from the Springs, some one remembered that, fifty years before, a young girl, Louisa Miller by name, who lived with her old grandmother in a little cottage on the mountain-side, had suddenly disappeared. She had gone out one morning to cut some grass, and had never appeared again. Several days later, some charcoal-burners coming down the mountain had found her sickle and her apron near the mouth of the cavern. Every one was now convinced that the skeleton that came over the fall was that of Louisa Miller. The poor girl had evidently been drawn into the cavern by the same mysterious power which had been so fatal to the weaker creatures. What was that power? No one knew.

The superstitious mountaineers declared that the Devil dwelt in the cavern, and the fear of it became more widespread than ever.

On afternoon in July, 1802, Dr. Weber was busy reclassifying his beloved insects. He had brought home several fine new specimens the night before. Sir Thomas, his chair tilted against the window, his legs on a soft-cushioned stool, was meditatively smoking his cigar and watching the operation.

"I found yesterday a splendid horn-beetle," said the

doctor. "The great bull fly of the Hartz oak trees. It is a very rare species. It has this peculiarity. Its right claw is divided into five branches. It is very rarely found."

Sir Thomas, who had hitherto remained indifferent, now arose suddenly and began to examine a specimen of the crab spider of South America, lying alone in a box. With disgust depicted on his fresh, rosy face, he exclaimed, "That is by all odds the most horrible work of the Creator. Just to see it makes me shudder." As he spoke, he grew deathly pale.

"Bah!" said Dr. Weber. "That is only the prejudice of youth. You see some one else frightened by a thing and that frightens you, and so the impression always remains. If you would only look at the spider with the microscope, you would be amazed to see the perfection of its organization, its beautiful arrangement, its supreme elegance, if one may use such an expression."

"It makes me sick!" said Sir Thomas shortly, and he turned away. "I don't know why it is," he continued, "but spiders always make my blood run cold."

The doctor laughed, but Sir Thomas besought him to throw away the noxious insect, adding that it spoiled the whole collection.

"Well, you are not obliged to look at it," answered the doctor, evidently getting angry. "If you don't like it, go away from it. Go out and take a drive."

"Yes. I will take your advice."

"But come back at six o'clock and sup with me. Do not mind my brusqueness, Sir Thomas."

The Commodore looked back and smiled as he left the room. At the door stood the little carriage that always awaited him, and, climbing in, he told the boy to drive to the Roth alp. He drew out from under the seat a flask of Burgundy wine, enveloped in straw, and, filling a large cup, drank it as a specific against the horrors caused by the sight of the hideous spider. When he had drunk it, the color returned to his face, and he felt disposed to laugh at his former discomfiture.

The wiry little horse, from the Ardennes, climbed the mountain road like a goat; insects hummed in the warm air, and birds sang in the thick bushes. To the right was the Roth alp, with its dense black forests, with here and there patches of vivid green, where the mosses and wild herbs and flowers grew. To the left flowed the river of Spinbronn. The higher they mounted, the bluer seemed the water, in which the sky was reflected, and the noise of which sounded like clashing cymbals. Sir Thomas lay back in his seat, his knees drawn almost up to his chin, deep in his usual reveries, while the tough little horse, with head bent to collar, struggled valiantly up the steep incline. Presently the road became less steep, and they found themselves a few paces away from the cavern of Spinbronn. The plants and grass about it were of a vivid tropical green, and the river that spread itself out over a bed of sand and black pebbles, before leaping over the fall, was as clear as crystal. Over it hovered a continuous mist of steam. The horse stopped to take breath, and Sir Thomas gazed about him, enjoying the beautiful scenery and the peaceful charm of the place.

"Why should I not take a bath?" he said suddenly.

"You can do so perfectly well," said the boy. "I will go into yonder field and gather wild strawberries. There are quantities of them there. I will be back in an hour."

"A good idea, Frank. Dr. Weber says that I drink too much Burgundy. I can counteract it with mineral water. I like the look of that little bed of sand."

Having tied the horse to a tree, the boy ran off, and Sir Thomas, seating himself upon the moss, began to pull off his boots.

"Be sure to come back in an hour, Frank," he called after him.

These were the last words that he ever spoke.

An hour later, Frank returned to the river. The horse and carriage and Sir Thomas' clothes were all that were in sight. Sir Thomas himself had disappeared. The sun was setting, heavy clouds were gath-

ering in the sky, no birds were singing, no insects chirping. A silence as of death brooded over the place. Much alarmed, Frank climbed up the rock overhanging the cavern and looked about him; no one was in sight. He called loudly. No one answered. The sound of his own voice, awakening the echoes, terrified him. Suddenly he remembered the disappearance, many years ago, of the young girl, at this same spot. He was about to leap down from the rock, when something caught his eye, and paralyzed him with horror. Down in the cavern, lying in the water, he saw two red motionless objects, and attached to them long, wire-like lines that moved and swayed with a strange, eerie motion. His senses, quickened to an unnatural degree by terror, caused him to hear distinctly the barking of a dog in the village, miles away, and the evening song of the swans upon the lake. Suddenly all was darkness.

When he revived, he fled down the mountain-side, shrieking wildly, leaving the horse and carriage to their fate, and in twenty minutes, bounding over rocks, tearing through bushes like a mad creature, he rushed into Dr. Weber's house crying wildly:

"Run, run! Sir Thomas is dead! Sir Thomas is in the cavern!"

Having delivered his fearful tidings to the doctor, Old Agatha, and several guests of the doctor's who happened to be present, the boy fell fainting to the floor. For hours afterward he was delirious. The doctor, followed by his guests, rushed out to the rescue of the unlucky Commodore. At ten o'clock they returned, bringing with them the horse and carriage and Sir Thomas' clothes. They had been unable to discover anything. No one could enter the cavern without being suffocated.

Frank had been left to the care of the old negress—he raving in delirium, she with her hands crossed over her knees, her eyes staring straight before her. From time to time she would go to the window and look out at the mountain-side, where the torches of the searching party were plainly visible.

As Dr. Weber approached, Agatha began to tremble.

He entered, his face pale, his lips compressed. Twenty charcoal-burners, in their broad, picturesque hats and with bronzed faces, followed him. He glanced about him, as if seeking something. His eyes fell on Agatha and she cried out:

"No, no, I will not do it!"

"But you must—I wish it."

She seemed to be seized by some invisible power; her whole body shivered, and as Dr. Weber motioned toward a chair, she fell upon it as rigid as a corpse. The pious mountaineers, unaccustomed to such uncanny proceedings, crossed themselves, while little Frank believed the old woman to be dead.

Weber passed his hand lightly over her face—"Are you there?"

"Yes, master."

"Do you see him?" At these words she shuddered.

"Yes, yes—I see him."

"Where is he?"

"Up there—in the far end of the cavern—dead."

"Dead," repeated the doctor. "How?"

"The spider—the crab spider—alas! alas!"

"Calm yourself," said the doctor, pale as ashes, "tell us about it clearly."

"The spider holds him by the throat—he is there, at the upper end, under that rock, bound to it by many cords."

Dr. Weber glanced at the assembled peasants, who, with eyes bursting from their sockets, were eagerly listening and murmuring, "Horrible."

He continued:

"Do you see the spider? Is it a large one?"

"O, master, never have I seen such a large one,—not even in the lowlands of Mocaris. It is as large as my head."

There was a silence. They all looked at each other with livid faces and hair standing on end. Weber alone seemed calm. Passing his hands several times over the face of the negress, he said:

"Now, Agatha, tell us how Sir Thomas died."

"He was bathing in the river near the mouth of the cavern. The spider caught sight of him, his white back gleaming in the sun. It was hungry; for several days it had caught no prey. Darting out of the cavern behind him, it fastened its claws in his neck, gave him a fatal sting and then retreated to its den. Sir Thomas sank beneath the water and died. Then the spider returned, spun its web over him and towed him into the cavern. I see him now. His body is quite black."

The doctor turned to Frank.

"Is it true that he took a bath?"

"Yes, doctor."

"At what hour?"

"At four o'clock."

"At four o'clock. It was very warm then—was it not?"

"Yes—it was very hot."

"Yes, yes," he cried. "The monster was not afraid to leave its lair in such a temperature."

He muttered some unintelligible words and then, turning to the peasants, "My friends," he said, "now we know whence came all the rubbish brought over the falls, and the skeleton that so alarmed the bathers. This it is that has brought ruin upon your village. It is the crab spider. The monster is still there, watching for its prey. Who knows how many victims it has made already!" and in a sort of frenzy he left the room shouting, "Bring fagots! Bring fagots!"

The peasants rushed out after him, and in ten minutes two large wagons loaded with fagots were on their way up the mountain—a long file of charcoal-burners, hatchet on shoulder, following after, in the solemn stillness of the night. The doctor and Frank walked ahead, and a pale melancholy moon lit up the scene.

Near the cavern the procession halted; the torches were lit, and the crowd advanced toward the cave. The limpid water reflected the light, and even the tops of the solemn pine trees were illuminated.

"Unload here," said the doctor. "We must block up the entrance to the cavern."

His orders were promptly obeyed. Some of the men standing in the wagons threw down the branches, while those below placed them in position. By midnight the entrance was completely barred. Dr. Weber applied a torch and set fire to the dry fagots. It was a weird and awful sight—the dense wood lit up, the earnest faces and the pale moon overhead. The flames leaped nimbly from branch to branch and soared heavenward, wrapped in thick masses of pine smoke. From out the cavern streamed a black vapor that came and went perpetually. All stood motionless, with straining eyes. A quarter-of-an-hour passed, and the doctor was beginning to get impatient, when a black object, with long, crooked, black legs, appeared in sight and threw itself toward the opening. A cry of terror went up. The spider, frightened at the flames, retreated; then, as if unable to bear the increasing heat any longer, again appeared and leaped into the flames. Its long crooked legs shrivelled up instantly. Its body was as large as a man's head, its color a reddish purple. It looked like a bladder filled with blood.

One of the peasants, fearing that it might leap out of the flames, threw his hatchet at it with such good aim that the blood spurted out and almost extinguished the fire—but it soon blazed up again, and thus perished this most obnoxious insect.

This is the strange event that ruined the good reputation of Spinbronn Hot Springs. My story is absolutely true.

It does not seem to me impossible that insects under the influence of these hot mineral springs, which furnish them the same conditions of existence and development as do the hot climates of the West Indies or South America, should grow to a fabulous size. It was this great heat which produced the colossal animals of the antediluvian period. Nevertheless, Dr. Weber did not believe it possible to bring back its former prosperity to Spinbronn, so he resold the house of Dr. Haselnoss and returned to South America with Agatha and his specimens.

A distinguished American traveller, who is, it is needless to say, city-born and city-bred, has recently written of the beauties of country life. He has sojourned in country places during the heat of many summers, and thinks he knows all about them. "Here are no brawls, no jealousies, no dissensions," he says; "all is peace and quietness." But alas! quarrels as fierce as that of "Joséphin" and "Josué" in the following story by Emmanuel Arène rage in every country town. Human nature is the same everywhere. R. D. Townsend translated "A Contest of Wits" from the French for the *Christian Union*.

A CONTEST OF WITS.

The village of Aygalades is pretty enough on week days, but it is on Sunday that it is seen at its best. Nestled, as you know, on a mountain slope close to Marseilles, placed neither too high nor too low, looking out over the sea without actually being on its border, it appears from a distance to be buried in a mass of small trees which quite overshadow it.

You would suppose, I am quite sure, that the people of this quiet corner of the earth, with their lovely sky, their sunshine and their famous fish soup, would have no great ambition for talking politics. Yet they do, the foolish fellows! And it was precisely about a matter of politics they were discussing one fine Sunday—some question concerning society at large—as they were seated face to face at one of the tables in Mother Germanos's arbor, that the two oldest friends in Aygalades, friends of thirty years' standing, neither more nor less, Joséphin, the postman, and stout Josué, the farmer of Ile-Aux-Cébes, almost came to blows, so that it was necessary to separate them after one of those terrible Southern disputes in which the combatants become enemies for life, never speaking to each other or visiting each other again.

Strong language had been used.

"Canaille!" Josué had said.

"Old villain!" the postman had retorted.

You will say that every day in political disputes things like these may be said between old friends such as they were. Perhaps so. But on Sunday! And before all the people who were there! That settled it. Without another word, without a gesture, the farmer set out for Ile-Aux-Cébes.

Then between these two men there began—under that strong, hot sun which down there, they say, penetrates even to the brain, and in the laziness of that country life—one of those half-concealed but implacable warfares that are much like the gentle, fine rain which falls almost imperceptibly and silently in winter at Aygalades (and perhaps elsewhere), and which, little by little and without one's noticing it, in the end soaks him to the bone. Every day, in his tiresome round through the forest, Joséphin stopped, sometimes at one house, sometimes at another. People would give him a drink and engage him in talk. Naturally, the constant subject of discussion was his quarrel with the farmer, and once his glass of wine finished, there were always execrations and heavy blows of the fist on the table, always the same evil prediction: "He will end in the penitentiary! He will never die in his own bed!"

The farmer, on his part, did not rush about from place to place, but in his thick peasant head he evolved a very neat means of avenging himself on his former friend.

This Ile-Aux-Cébes, where he occasionally lived, is quite out of the world—at least six or seven miles from Aygalades; it is, once you get there, a pleasant enough corner of the country to look at, with its tilled land, its vineyards rising row upon row upon the hillside, and above all its *cébes* (edible mushrooms), such as you can find nowhere else. But to get there at all over the stony mountain paths is by no means an easy matter. This the farmer knew very well, and it was in this way that he expected to worry his former friend, Joséphin.

The next day after their combat, abandoning his little *château* at Aygalades, he went to live for good and

all at Ile-Aux-Cébes, and every day he arranged to have sent to him by a friend in Marseilles a package or a letter—no matter what, even a piece of blank paper in an envelope—so as to compel the unhappy postman to make that terrible trip, and to add those six miles in the sun and dust to the fatigue already sustained by his weary limbs.

Joséphin was altogether too proud to complain; he did not flinch. Heaven knows, notwithstanding, what rage was in his heart. Not only this terrible fatigue every day, but, besides that, the jeers of the country people that he felt sure were being uttered all around him—for in a village like this people are not over-delicate, and the fine joke which the farmer had evolved struck everybody as highly amusing—all this was bad enough, but what was worst of all for Joséphin was to hear, when toward noon he arrived at Ile-Aux-Cébes, and stood enduring the jeering looks of the farm hands coming up to their dinner, the deep voice of his former friend, Josué, crying mockingly to his servant-maid:

"Here! run down stairs, Annette; I think there is some mail for us again."

As long as the fine weather lasted, the postman stood it pretty well; but when cold weather began, and the paths were covered with frost, the poor wretch could hardly endure it any longer, and when one morning he slipped on the rocks, wet with the dew, and almost fell into a ravine, he determined to beg for mercy—not from his enemy, you may be sure, but from his official chiefs in the postal service, who, moved by his complaint, and recognizing that this six miles' walk daily evidently constituted an extra and supplementary duty, gave him his choice of having an assistant granted him to make the trips to Ile-Aux-Cébes or of himself receiving forty sous by way of indemnity every time he had to take a letter to the farmer.

Joséphin did not hesitate; he chose the forty sous. He did this not so much from the love of gain, as you might suppose, but because he was resolved on revenge —and it certainly was a fine revenge that he had.

When it became known in the country roundabout that his trips to Ile-Aux-Cébes brought him in forty sous additional, there was general admiration of the postman's cleverness; and public opinion, so easy to shift from side to side, now made sport of the stout old farmer. "Decidedly," people said, "Joséphin is the more cunning of the two."

And this he proved still better a few days afterward, when Josué, who was quite crushed, suppressed his daily letters from Marseilles, naturally supposing that he would thus cut off the supplies from his enemy. For Joséphin, by one of those strokes of genius which down in that country seem born with people, subscribed in the farmer's name to a little Marseilles newspaper, and every day carried a copy of it to Ile-Aux-Cébes, thus continuing to gain his indemnity of forty sous in spite of his enemy. Now indeed was Joséphin indeed regarded as a great man! And really it was a sight to see him trotting along the road with his most deliberate gait, whistling as he went, and describing circles in the air with his hollywood walking-stick. And when he arrived at the little entrance to the farm, still as before at the hour of noon, and in the presence of the same farm hands whose mocking looks were now turned toward their employer, he would in his turn cry out: "Here! Just run down here a minute, Annette. I think there is some mail for you again."

There was no reason why this should not continue indefinitely; and, in fact, if I may believe Mariù of the inn in the lower town, whose story I am faithfully transcribing, the great quarrel did last all summer and all winter. It was only in the springtime that they concluded peace, one clear April day when there was nothing but good in the air. It was very simple, very touching. The stout Josué in time had become interested in the paper which came to him in this odd way every day; so he would go down to look for it himself. The postman usually threw it on a table. This particular morning, without thinking, he handed it to the farmer. Their hands touched.

"Joséphin!"

"Josué!"

And since then you may see them both, as I have—a good deal older, to be sure, for this tale is already one of the distant past—again engaged on the square before the church in their games of bowling, and highly respected at Aygalades and all the country through because they were clever enough to gain through their quarrel, the one a paper that cost him nothing, the other forty sous a day from the government; for I need not tell you that the paper continues to arrive every day, and that also every day Joséphin takes it to the farm. But now Josué comes half way to meet him, and the two friends arrive at Ilę-Aux-Cébes tranquilly reading together the serial story in the paper, and comfortably seated in the farmer's carriage; while at the house the old servant Annette, and the farm hands, now full of respect for both, await them with the still smoking fish soup ready on the table.

The author of this exciting story from *Atalanta*, Mr. Arthur Lee Knight, has not spared his material. Here is every kind of a hunt mentioned, from bird-hunting, through rhinoceros- and tiger-hunting, to man-hunting. The latter, as might be expected, is the most thrilling of all.

THE TWO MIDSHIPMEN.

A TALE OF THE EAST AFRICAN COAST.

On the afternoon of a certain sultry day in the month of June, two handsome bronzed midshipmen, accompanied by a native guide, might have been seen wending their way in an easterly direction along the banks of the Kingani River, which discharges itself into the Indian Ocean, close to the town of Darra Salaam, on the east coast of Africa. These two midshipmen, named Harry Vaughan and Oswald Graham, carried guns in their hands and game-bags slung over their shoulders; and their guide—an undoubted negro, with shiny black skin, blubber lips, and frizzled hair—was equipped in the same manner, but in addition to a gun he carried a heavy rifle and a quantity of ammunition. A peep into the game-bags would have disclosed the fact that there were only a few quail and wood-pigeons in them, in spite of the fact that the afternoon was now fast drawing to a close, and that the young sportsmen —who belonged to H. M. S. Galatea, then lying at the Darra Salaam anchorage—had been ashore in quest of game ever since sunrise. The fact was that these young gentlemen had conceived the ambitious project of shooting hippopotami—which animals abound in the Kingani River—and the greater part of the day had been spent in various ambushes on the banks of the stream close to the usual haunts of these unwieldy great animals, with the result that two of the monsters had been slaughtered. It had been found, however, impossible to secure the carcasses of the slain creatures, owing

to the strength of the current; and, much to the chagrin of our midshipmen friends, they found themselves forced to return without being able to triumphantly bear back any trophies of their prowess to exhibit to their messmates in the Galatea. Their native guide, Booboo, was equally disappointed at the turn affairs had taken, though, as he kept perpetually observing to his young masters during the homeward tramp: "Massa! You no make bobbery 'bout dis ting, for sho'. Next time de Galatea make anchor at Darra Salaam, Booboo get one big canoe ready and take Massa up de riber—oh! eber so many mile up; and dere am tousand of 'potamus waiting for Massa shoot. Booboo got plenty friend up dere, and s'all make easy to bring de 'potamus body on sore."

"But suppose we never come back to Darra Salaam, Booboo," young Graham observed after one of these speeches. "I believe we are off to Bombay next week, and we may not return to the Coast of Africa again."

"Oh, yes! Massa come back for sho'," the negro answered, "else all de country am fill up wid de rascal slave-dealer, who now am make hide der ogly head. Oh yes! Galatea come back to coast in de monsoon and make plenty prize money; and den massa want to shoot 'potamus. Booboo am ready wid de big canoe, and dere am sport plenty mosh, massa, make sure."

"Well! we won't forget you, Booboo, if the Galatea does come back," observed Oswald Vaughan. "We've had a stunning day of it, anyhow; haven't we, Harry?"

"I should think so!" returned his companion. "Oh, how jolly it is to get ashore in these wild jungles with one's gun, instead of being cooped up on board ship!"

"And though we didn't manage to get any trophies," continued the other, "we shot the hippopotami stone dead, for I saw them being washed down the river. I don't think it was bad for our first attempt at big game."

"We've got some quail and wood-pigeons to show the fellows," said his messmate, peering into his game-

bag, "which is lucky, or we should have been a good deal chaffed."

Harry Vaughan and Oswald Graham were sworn chums, and had already been serving together on board the Galatea (which was an eight-gun sloop) for two years. They were at the time of our story sixteen years old, and were handsome, well-grown boys, devoted to sport and manly exercises of all kinds. Their firm friendship had never been marred by disputes or quarrels, and Captain Madden, who commanded the Galatea, looked upon them as the two most promising young officers in the ship.

Darra Salaam, where the Sultan of Zanzibar has a residence, is situated upon the coast only a few degrees south of the equator, and so the whole region in its neighborhood is extremely hot, especially up the rivers, where, owing to the dense overhanging jungles and multitudinous mangrove bushes, the cooling influences of the life-giving sea-breeze are almost unfelt. The rude track which our midshipmen friends were returning by, as a rule, followed the sinuous course of the river; and, though the fierce rays of an almost vertical sun were intercepted by the umbrageous trees overhead, which "wove twilight o'er the path," the air was so stagnant, and so permeated with the pestilential vapors which arose from the alligator-haunted mud-banks of the stream, that the heat was more than usually oppressive on this particular afternoon; so much so that even our two midshipmen, who had spent a couple of years in the tropics, and were therefore to a certain extent acclimatized, began to feel its debilitating influence.

"I say, Oswald, old chap," exclaimed young Vaughan at length, "I vote we rest under the shade of those bamboos, and take it easy for half an hour. This heat is almost unbearable."

"Right you are, Harry. You know we needn't be on board till 8 o'clock, so we've heaps of time."

Even the almost naked Booboo was not sorry to avail himself of the midshipmen's proposal, and the trio were

soon stretched upon a convenient piece of grassy sward under the shade of the lofty, motionless bamboos, listening to the never-ceasing quaint chorus of bird and insect cries emanating from the gloomy depths of the surrounding jungle.

Suddenly Booboo—who was squatting upon the ground in negro fashion—started, and appeared to be listening intently.

"What's up, old Booboo?" asked Graham. "Do you see a fetich in the jungle?"

"No fetich, massa, but I tink one leopard am prowl about amongst de tree. Booboo not bery sure, but plenty mosh tink his eye not deceive."

"A leopard! What a spree it would be to shoot it!" exclaimed Oswald Graham excitedly as he seized his gun. "Shall we go after it, Harry?"

"It would be jolly fun to knock over a leopard," answered his chum, "but to tell you the honest truth, I'm rather fagged, and should prefer resting here. If you like to follow the beast up with the rifle, Oswald, and take Booboo with you, I'll stop here till you come back. I suppose you won't be gone long, old man?"

"Ten minutes at the outside," answered his friend, "but I wish you would come too."

"I'm too lazy, really, and have got a bit of a headache, and as we have only the one rifle, you may as well make use of it."

Seeing that his friend was really indisposed for more sport, and intending to return immediately, should it turn out that Booboo had raised a false alarm, Oswald took the rifle from the negro, carefully examined it, and then, followed by his sable attendant, plunged into the recesses of the forest, Booboo marking a tree here and there as they proceeded, in order to obviate any difficulty in finding the way back.

Leaving Harry Vaughan stretched out drowsily under the clump of bamboos, we shall follow the fortunes of Oswald and the negro.

"Booboo," said the midshipman, as he forced his

way through the tangled brake, "did you actually see the leopard?"

"I see de tip of um tail, massa, as he wriggle um way troo de jongle, and I tink him no trabel bery far dis hot afternoon—bery foolis leopard else, massa."

"Well! I only hope I'll bag him," observed Oswald; "his skin would make a lovely rug for the mater."

Booboo now advised silence, and the two glided stealthily along, making as little noise as possible.

A few minutes had passed in this way, when, just as the middy had entered a particularly dense piece of jungle, he heard a rustling sound among the underwood close by, and in another second a large and handsome leopard sprang out almost under Oswald's nose, and before that startled young gentleman could raise his rifle to fire had bounded off in the opposite direction, sheltered from observation by the great boles of the forest trees.

"Well, that is a sell!" said the middy, in a disappointed tone.

"Nebber you gib him up, Massa," exclaimed Booboo, encouragingly; "I tink him lie low in de forest, not bery mosh distant."

Oswald followed up eagerly on the animal's trail, but for once that artful stalker of the wild denizens of the forest, Booboo, was at fault; for the spotted cat did not again expose himself incautiously to view, nor could the slightest sound be detected to give a clew to his whereabouts.

At length, hot, and in a not very amiable temper, Oswald halted and consulted his watch.

"I told Harry I should not be away more than ten minutes," he exclaimed, "and we have been exactly twenty. I'm very sorry, Booboo, but I must go back at once; I had no idea how the time had flown."

The negro made no objection, and the two made their way back in silence to the spot where Harry Vaughan had been left half asleep.

On coming in sight of the clump of bamboos, Oswald was surprised to see that his friend was not stretched

out under their grateful shade. Nor was there any trace of gun or game-bag. Thinking, however, that he might be searching for bird's nests or plants somewhere close by, he gave a loud Australian cooee, which might have been heard a mile away.

There was no response.

"My gosh! what am de meanin' of dis?" exclaimed Booboo, in an alarmed tone. "Can de foolis leetle officer make bathe in de riber? Dat case he am gobble up by de hongry alligator! What can do, Massa Graham?"

But Oswald had already rushed to the river's brink, and was anxiously scrutinizing its turbid surface—shouting his friend's name again and again in loud and agonized tones.

But there was no answer to these repeated cries, and, overcome by his feelings, Oswald sank down upon the muddy bank and buried his face in his hands. He felt bitterly that he ought never to have left his friend alone in the forest; and that at any rate he ought to have returned in ten minutes, as he had promised. He had broken his word, and it was probable that his messmate's death had resulted from his thoughtlessness.

He was aroused by Booboo, who put his dingy hand upon his shoulder.

"Massa no gib way in dis fashion," said the honest negro. "I tink now that Massa Vaughan hab lost him way in de jongle, and we must make search and shout like de mad ting. Soon sall find leetle officer, Massa, you makee sore."

Oswald felt that this was good advice, and rousing himself with an effort, he resolved to leave no stone unturned in the endeavor to find his missing chum, and immediately set off with Booboo and penetrated a considerable distance, in every direction, into the forest, shouting loudly at intervals. Still there was the same mysterious silence, and no trace of the absent midshipman could be discovered.

Disconsolate and weary, and a prey to the most gloomy forebodings, Oswald returned to the clump of

bamboos, and proceeded to narrowly examine the ground to see if there was any trace of footmarks. He was busily engaged in this task when a sudden shout from the negro made him look up.

What he saw made him feel sick at heart. Booboo had extracted from some mangrove bushes close to the margin of the river Harry Vaughan's game-bag and a pith helmet which he had been wearing—and was holding them up to view.

In a moment Oswald had sprung to the negro's side, with a face as pale as death, and said, "Booboo, what is the meaning of this? Is it possible that some cruel natives can have taken my friend prisoner? Are there any robbers about in these jungles?"

The poor negro had turned almost green with anxiety or fright while the middy was rapidly pouring out these questions. At length he gasped out: "Robber, Massa? No such ting am known on dis part of the coast; but, Massa!"—here Booboo convulsively clutched the young middy's arm—"I bery mosh afraid dat some rascal Arab slaver man hab catchee leetle buccra officer and take him in dere canoe up de riber. De Arab man, Massa, no care what him do to white or black man!"

"Then what shall we do?" exclaimed the midshipman aghast. "Where do you suppose they——"

Oswald stopped short, for his eye had fallen upon two negroes who at a rapid pace were paddling a small canoe down the river. So strong was the current that the little craft appeared to fly; and the occupants, as soon as they caught sight of the middy and Booboo, gave several loud shouts, and appeared to be endeavoring to steer the canoe in the direction of the clump of bamboos. Fearing that their intentions might be hostile, and that they were only the advanced guard of a large force, Oswald seized his gun and held it pointed menacingly in their direction. Booboo did the same.

It soon became apparent, however, that the two negroes were friendly, for they made signs of amity, and appeared to be unarmed. In a few seconds they had run their canoe ashore, close to the spot where our

friends were standing, leaped out, and immediately accosted Booboo in some native dialect. Oswald, of course, understood not a word that was uttered, but he gathered from the vehement manner and numerous gesticulations of the speakers that they were imparting some important intelligence.

And so it proved.

Booboo listened in silence to his compatriots' story, and as soon as it was finished, turned to Oswald with a scared and anxious face.

"Massa! dese two men hab just come down de riber, and dey say dat about one mile up de stream dey met seberal canoe, which am belong to one large slave dhow, dat it make anchor long way up. In one of de largest of dese canoe dey see one buccra leetle officer who am tied wid de coir rope, and look all like one white corpse. De slaver man shout to dem to keep out of de way, and say dat if they tell de 'tory of what him see in de canoe to any of de white man, dat der troat shall be cut at anoder time. De Arab no try to catch him at dat time, Massa, as de current am berry strong, and dey can do noddin. Now, Massa, it am quite plain dat dis leetle officer am Massa Vaughan, and de Arab teef hab carry him off when him sleep under de tree. Ah! de rascal teef what buy and sell de human flesh!" and Booboo shook his black fist angrily in the direction in which he believed the slavers to have gone.

Oswald had immediately made up his mind what he should do. Darra Salaam, where the Galatea was at anchor, was only two miles distant, and he would at once return to the ship and report what had happened. The negroes offered the use of their canoe, which was sufficiently large to hold four; and in the space of ten minutes or so she had been sent spinning down the river and guided alongside the sloop, when Oswald quickly gained the quarter-deck and informed the officer of the watch of what had happened.

A few minutes later the Galatea's blue-jackets were busily engaged in manning and arming boats, for it had been determined to at once dispatch a powerful

force up the river in order to rescue Harry Vaughan and capture the slaver. Every one worked with feverish energy, for it was well understood that the unfortunate young midshipman's life depended upon the celerity with which the expedition could be got under way. Captain Madden had decided himself to command the flotilla of boats, leaving the first lieutenant in charge of the Galatea. The force was to be conveyed in the steam pinnace, two cutters and the jolly-boat, and was to consist of fifty blue-jackets armed with cutlasses and revolvers, and twenty marines with their rifles and bayonets. The steam pinnace, which was to be commanded by the captain in person, would take the other boats in tow, and was armed in the bows with a nine-pounder Armstrong gun.

In an hour's time all preparations had been made, steam was up in the pinnace, all the men told off for the expedition were in their places; and as Captain Madden, standing erect in the stern-sheets, gave the order, "Shove off forward!" a loud and hearty cheer was given by the men on board the sloop, which was energetically reciprocated by their comrades of the flotilla. The twin-screws turned ahead, and in a few minutes the line of boats was well inside the mouth of the river.

Oswald Graham had been told off—much to his own gratification—to accompany the captain in the pinnace, and Booboo and the other two negroes, who were to act as pilots and interpreters, went in the same boat. The cutters were commanded by junior lieutenants with midshipmen under them. The tide had fortunately begun to flow when the expedition started—which was considered a good omen, and much facilitated the passage up the broad but tortuous Kingani River.

A bright lookout was kept by the officers, for it was thought probable that an attack might be made upon the boats at any moment, especially as there were many convenient creeks overhung with mangroves and palms, where canoes could easily lie in ambush without fear of discovery.

Oswald was full of excitement, and longed to cross swords with the cowardly slaver's men who had so cunningly and impudently kidnapped his chum. One terrible fear oppressed him, and that was that the Arabs, on learning that a relief expedition had been organized, would murder Harry Vaughan, and then retreat up the river, out of reach of an attack.

The sun began to get low in the heavens, and as the twilight in tropical regions is exceedingly brief, Booboo advised that before darkness set in the flotilla should anchor for the night. This, however, Captain Madden would not hear of. He was determined to push on at all hazards, and promised the negroes a handsome reward if they safely piloted the boats before midnight to the spot where the slave dhow was supposed to be lying. It might be feasible to make a night attack, and so take the rascals by surprise.

As was soon brought forcibly home to the naval officers, however, Arab slave-dealers are not very easily overreached in cunning or strategy.

Just as the blood-red sun was descending to the horizon amid a glorious assemblage of purple and golden clouds, it was observed from the pinnace that a large canoe was approaching round a bend in the river. On perceiving the man-of-war boats, the occupants hoisted a white flag, and appeared to wish to communicate. The pinnace's engines were stopped, and in a few moments the canoe had dashed alongside. In her were three unprepossessing-looking Arabs, one of whom handed Captain Madden a letter. As it was written in Arabic characters, the missive was handed to Booboo, who deciphered it as follows:

"To the great English Sea Captain:

"I, Mahomet Ben Ali, write these lines to inform you that the young officer who has fallen, by the will of the Prophet, into our hands will be restored to his ship if the great sea captain will pay me £500, and allow my dhow to go to sea without molestation. Otherwise, the little officer's throat will be cut.

"Mahomet Ben Ali."

Great was Captain Madden's indignation on hearing the impudent message thus conveyed to him. He consulted for a few minutes with the other officers, and then turned to Booboo.

"Tell them," he said sternly, "that I am willing to pay a ransom of £100 for the release of the young gentleman, provided that he is at once restored to us. As to my allowing the dhow to go to sea, I have no power to prevent her doing so if she is a lawful trader. If she is a slaver, she must take her chance of being captured; but I will undertake that she is not molested while in the river, if Mahomet Ben Ali will agree to my proposition about Mr. Vaughan."

The envoys listened attentively while Booboo translated this message to them, and then, remarking that they thought it probable that their captain would agree to the proposed terms, they shoved off, and paddled away up the river as hard as they could go.

The flotilla proceeded about a couple of miles further up the river, and then anchored in a convenient place to await the return of Mahomet Ben Ali's messengers. There now seemed every probability of a peaceful solution of the difficulty; and, though Oswald would have dearly loved a brush with the rascally slaver's men, and to have had a hand in capturing the dhow, he was immensely relieved to know that his chum Harry was alive, and that there was every chance of his being restored to them safe and sound that very night.

The brief tropical twilight had long since been merged in the gloomy shades of night, but there was a partial moon, which, though occasionally obscured by driving masses of cloud, lit up the turbid, sullen current of the river and the nigrescent overhanging trees with a weird and ghostly glamour, which made the scene a very impressive one; and this was enhanced by the strange sounds that came ever and anon booming from the shadowy depths of the surrounding jungles, conspicuous among which was the reiterated howl of the hungry prowling jackal.

A bright lookout was kept for the expected messen-

gers, but Oswald's keen eyes were the first to distinguish the phosphorescent gleam of the water at the canoe's bows, as she swept at a rapid pace around a projecting point, and steered for the spot where the flotilla was at anchor with lanterns displayed.

As the little craft approached, every eye was strained to see if Harry Vaughan was in her, and a murmur of disappointment went round when it was seen that he was not a passenger by her. Nevertheless, the envoys brought satisfactory and peaceable news. The slaver captain—they informed Booboo—was willing to agree to Captain Madden's proposal, but he wished to receive the £100 before handing over his prisoner, and therefore begged that the Galatea's boats would proceed up the river and deliver the money on board the dhow, when the young midshipman would be at once returned unharmed to his countrymen.

To this proposition Captain Madden was fain to agree, and he was not averse to seeing with his own eyes what manner of vessel the dhow really was. Foreseeing that a sum of money might be required by the slavers, he had had the good sense to bring a considerable sum in English gold with him, and so there seemed to be no further difficulties to contend with. As for Oswald, he was overjoyed at the glad prospect of his friend's speedy release, for he could not conceal from himself that he had been responsible to a considerable extent for the disaster.

Anchors were at once weighed, and every preparation made for proceeding up the river. The envoys informed Booboo that the dhow was only ten miles further up, and that she was lying near the right bank with a light suspended from her yard. Captain Madden offered to tow these Arabs back to their vessel, but this they declined, and having pushed for the shore and disembarked, they drew their light craft up on the bank, and immediately disappeared into the gloomy recesses of the adjacent forest.

Under the careful guidance of the black pilots, the flotilla made rapid progress up-stream, and the moon-

light was sufficiently bright to allow of near objects being distinctly seen. In spite of the pacific overtures of Mahomet Ben Ali, it was thought prudent to be on the qui vive against a surprise, and a careful watch was kept on both banks as the boats swept onward. Nothing suspicious, however, was seen, and no sounds were audible but the puffing and throbbing of the steam pinnace's engines, as her bows clave the darkened waters, and the weird cries of the forest prowlers.

At length, shadowy and indistinct, the huge outline of the anchored dhow hove into sight, not a quarter of a mile distant. The pinnace's engines were now stopped, and the other boats were cast off and ordered to proceed under oars. Again the little steamer went ahead at half-speed, and every moment the dhow became more and more clearly defined in the ghostly light. How Oswald's young and affectionate heart beat with the happy anticipation of being the first to jump on board and assure his chum of his safety!

The huge unwieldy vessel was lying about twenty yards from the right bank of the river, and, as the envoys had predicted, a lantern hung swinging from her yard. There seemed no signs of life on board, and consequently Captain Madden hailed in a loud tone and ordered Booboo to do the same. There was no response to this, but to the surprise of the onlookers a dark form was suddenly seen to drop in a hurried manner over the stern of the vessel into a canoe, and then paddle away hurriedly to the shore. Booboo shouted to this mysterious individual, but elicited no reply.

"Queer fellows, and no mistake!" ejaculated the captain; "run us alongside the dhow," he continued, turning to the coxswain.

In a moment the pinnace had dashed alongside, but, much to the astonishment of the naval officers, there still appeared to be an unaccountable and ominous silence reigning throughout the vessel.

Like lightning Oswald sprang up her side, for he was seized with a sudden misgiving which made him

feel sick at heart. The captain and some of his followers followed suit.

The dhow was deserted.

There could be no doubt of this fact, for she was a large, hollow, undecked vessel, and by the light of the moon every portion of her was revealed to the anxious scrutiny of the Galatea's officers. There was some ballast in her, but nothing more, as far as could be seen.

Poor Oswald, as pale as death, stood like a statue, surveying the scene with a piteous expression of grief upon his handsome young face. He could not collect himself to speak.

"The rascally villains have deceived us!" shouted the captain in a rage; "where's that fellow that we saw making off in a canoe?"

"He has just landed, sir," answered the coxswain of the pinnace; "shall I pick him off with a rifle?"

"Shoot him down like a dog!" answered the captain, emphatically.

The man was just about to disappear amid the trees as the blue-jacket raised his rifle, but as if some sudden thought had occurred to him, he paused for a moment and glanced back in the direction of the dhow. The act was fatal to him, for the coxswain took advantage of the movement to cover him with his rifle. There was a sharp report, and the Arab fell heavily forward upon his face—a corpse.

Little knew the naval officers at that moment how richly this villain had deserved the tragical fate that overtook him thus precipitately!

Oswald and some of the blue-jackets began making a systematic search of the dhow, while the captain conferred with the officers in the cutters as to the best course to pursue. Booboo, meanwhile, was holding an earnest conversation with the negro pilots, who were evidently much excited at the unexpected turn affairs had taken, and kept pointing vehemently in the direction of that portion of the forest which lay upon the right bank.

At length Booboo approached Captain Madden. "Dis pilot man say, massa captain," he began, "dat the rascal teef what am own de dhow hab all make run away into de jongle, and take leetle massa Vaughan wid dem, but him say dere is one large fortify village not berry far from dis, and him make sore dat de slaver man hab run away dere, and massa captain like dey can——"

The rest of Booboo's speech was cut short by an appalling yell from the bows of the vessel where Oswald Graham and his party had made their way. Then the middy and his followers rushed aft with blanched faces.

"What's the matter, my boy?" demanded the captain, drawing a revolver.

"Gunpowder!—fuse!—fired!" gasped Oswald in terrified tones.

Instinctively the captain grasped his meaning. "Into the boats, every one!" he thundered. "Your lives depend upon your celerity, but let there be no confusion!"

With great presence of mind the men obeyed these orders, and scarcely had the boats quitted the dhow's side when a fearful explosion rent the air. Into the darkness of the midnight sky shot a huge mass of flame, accompanied by eddying dense volumes of gray smoke, amid which were hurled innumerable fragments of the ill-fated vessel, which quickly descended about the boats in a perfect storm. Fortunately no serious damage was done, but several men were wounded by the falling woodwork and other débris.

There was now no longer any doubt as to the mission of the solitary Arab whose corpse lay in the dark grass on the river's brink. He had been deputed to remain on board till the flotilla was sighted, with orders to light a train which would blow up the dhow just after the arrival of the Galatea's party on board. By the mercy of Providence, this diabolical plot had not taken effect in the way that had been intended, for not a single life had been lost. It had, however, been an extremely narrow escape.

It was at once determined to land the force and march

upon the village, which was only a couple of miles distant, without delay, in the hopes of taking the inhabitants by surprise. Booboo and the pilots offered to act as guides, and leaving the boats in charge of an armed party, with orders to anchor out in the stream, the remainder of the force set off along a beaten track through the jungle, which led—the negroes affirmed—straight to the village, whither it was supposed the slaver's men had fled.

Poor Oswald's feelings on realizing the extreme jeopardy in which his chum stood may be imagined. With pale face and set teeth he marched on with his company, inwardly praying that they might yet be in time to save him from the clutches of the ruthless Arabs who had kidnapped him with such deliberate cruelty.

It soon became evident that it would not be possible to take the village by surprise, for the jungle was infested with small bodies of the enemy, who, as opportunity offered, opened a desultory fire upon the advancing blue-jackets and marines from behind the cover of the trees, but this was promptly and effectively returned by the naval brigade, who poured in galling volleys from their deadly rifles, which drove the skulking foe to seek shelter further in the bush. Fortunately, too, the jungle was soon left behind, and the force found itself on an open, cultivated stretch of country, dotted with fruit trees, which seemed to point to the proximity of a native village.

No enemy was visible, and, advancing at the double-quick, Captain Madden and his men soon had the satisfaction of beholding the palisaded settlement, where Harry Vaughan was believed to be incarcerated.

"Forward, men!" roared the captain. "A sovereign to the first man over that palisade!"

The thin line of determined men swept on to the attack—the weird moonlight illuminating their rugged, resolute faces, and glistening on rifle barrel, cutlass and bayonet. The advance was made in grim silence, for orders had been issued to that effect.

The impressive stillness which reigned for a time supreme was suddenly broken by the inhabitants of the village, who, crowding up inside the palisade, uttered terrific yells of anger and defiance, and brandished their weapons with menacing gestures. Then came gushing from their musket barrels the ruddy death flames, and ping, ping, sang the bullets about the heads of the advancing brigade. Fortunately, however, firearms were scarce among the garrison, the majority being armed with spears and swords. The marksmen, too, were indifferent shots, and but few of their bullets found a billet.

Calmly and deliberately the seamen and marines poured in a withering volley, which did tremendous execution amid the ranks of their opponents. Then, with fixed bayonets, they swept on to engage the foe hand to hand, led by Captain Madden, who, waving his sword over his head, shouted to them to follow him to death or victory.

Feeling secure in the power of their numbers and in the strength of their deep ditch and palisades, however, the Arabs and their allies stood their ground with wonderful tenacity, and seemed nothing loth to join in a general mêlée. They had not long to wait, for, under a galling fire from above, the gallant seamen and marines threw themselves into the ditch, and a few moments later were clambering over the awkward palisades, in spite of the furious endeavors of the enemy to frustrate the attempt. Oswald, excited beyond measure at the stirring scenes in which he was taking a part, and anxious to distinguish himself in the attempt to rescue his brother-midshipman, had managed to keep well to the front during the attack, and, assisted by a couple of blue-jackets, who warded off the numerous blows that were aimed at the plucky youngster's head, was the first to place foot on the other side of the palisades. Fortunately, he was promptly followed by a score of men, or his life would undoubtedly have been sacrificed to the fury of the enraged Arabs.

The latter made a strenuous resistance, but it was of

no avail. The Galatea's men carried all before them, and fought with such splendid elan and dash that, after a few minutes' desperate resistance, the villagers turned and fled in the greatest consternation, throwing away their arms and everything that would serve to impede their flight.

A strict search for Harry Vaughan was made throughout the village, but to the general horror no trace of him could be found in any of the houses, and the prisoners resolutely refused to answer any questions. For more than an hour was the quest continued with the same disappointing results. Then the force was divided up into parties, who were told off to scour the adjacent country, in hopes of finding some clew in connection with the missing midshipman. Of one of these parties, Oswald, accompanied by Booboo, took command, and made a careful search of that portion of the jungle which lay adjacent to the village. All seemed in vain, and the young middy, sick at heart, was about to withdraw his men from what seemed a hopeless task, when he suddenly spied a dark figure rapidly descending a huge tree not many yards distant. In spite of the uncertain light, he instantly recognized the figure of his chum, and with a wild cry of delight rushed forward to meet him.

It was indeed Harry Vaughan, and, what is more, he was quite unhurt, in spite of the many dangers he had encountered. While the garrison had been making their preparations for defence, he had managed to give them the slip; but when climbing over the palisades was observed by some of the Arabs, who instantly gave chase. Being a fleet-footed boy, however, he kept well ahead of his pursuers, and on reaching the jungle managed to climb into a sheltering tree, where he lay in safety, but was afraid to descend for fear of again falling into the hands of the cruel Arabs.

My readers may imagine how happy the two midshipmen felt as they steamed down the river again to Darra Salaam, and how thankful those who had been left on board the Galatea were when they learned of the success of the expedition.

This famous story has been freshly translated from the German for ROMANCE by S. E. Boggs.

AUNT CAROLINE'S WEDDING-PRESENT.

YES, we were really married.

The clergyman, with impressive solemnity, announced that we were now one, and sanctioned our union with the blessing of the church. He shook my hand, and the tears stood in his eyes as he wished me unending happiness. He kissed Eleonore, whom he had christened twenty years before, and repeated again: "God bless you, my dear child!"

Then came the wedding-guests, one after the other, to congratulate us. There was quite a procession.

The sixth person in the procession was Aunt Caroline. She is Eleonore's aunt, but I am quite as fond of her as if she were my own. She is the best of creatures, always ready to come when you need her, and quite as willing to stay away when she fancies that her society might be burdensome. She is one of those generous, patient aunts who in winter always have on hand a store of goodies for hungry nieces and nephews; and in summer are ever ready to take charge of a particularly restless schoolboy or girl, whose exuberant vacation-spirits render him or her an annoyance to the quiet home-circle. In a word, Aunt Caroline is a noble example of what an aunt really ought to be.

"Dear Felix—Dear Eleonore," she said as she clasped our hands, "my wedding present is so cumbersome that I arranged to have it sent directly to your house, where you will find it when you return from your bridal-tour. It will welcome you to your new home, and I trust it may give you much pleasure, and daily remind you of your old Aunt Caroline."

"It is sure to give us pleasure, whatever it may be," responded my wife, affectionately embracing the dear old lady.

A dozen times a day, during our journey, we spoke of Aunt Caroline's present, and tried to guess what it might be. Eleonore was certain that it was a handsome book-case; while I maintained with equal confidence that it must be a superb bronze ornament.

At last, after fourteen October days of crimson-tinted forests, and deep blue bays; enchanting sunsets, and cosy evenings beside sparkling hearth-fires in comfortable hotels,—after two weeks of perfect enjoyment, we returned to the charming little home which had been prepared for us, and which was henceforth to be our haven of happiness.

I kissed Eleonore when I helped her from the carriage, and murmured: "Welcome home, my dear wife."

She returned my caress rather hastily, and, running past me into the house, said: "Now we shall see what it is."

Alas! we learned only too soon. Rika, our maid-of-all-work, had illuminated the little drawing-room for our reception. The handsome swinging-lamp above the centre-table—a present from Uncle Augustus—was lighted. Red wax candles burned brightly in each of the two bronze candelabra—Uncle Christopher's present—on the mantel; while two lighted student-lamps, likewise wedding gifts, stood on the piano. The light from all these served to illumine, and direct our glances the moment we entered the room toward Aunt Caroline's present, which hung directly opposite the door. It was an atrociously painted representation of the parable of the Prodigal Son, and looked as if it might have originated in a manufactory of "curiosities." Its true origin I never learned, although I had ample opportunity to study it.

It is quite certain, however, that dear Aunt Caroline, knowing my own and Eleonore's fondness for pictures, and with her heart overflowing with benevolence and affection, had purchased the huge canvas at some auction, paying for it a good round sum, and consoling herself for the extravagance with thoughts of the pleasure the picture would give us.

The canvas measured eight by ten feet. The frame was a broad gilded affair; the composition itself absurd in the extreme. In the middle foreground a group of figures in gala attire, represented the returned Prodigal, his parents, and the guests invited to celebrate the return. On a sort of raised gallery in the background were a number of figures with cymbals, dancing and singing. All these persons were in a kind of pillared hall, to the left of which was an abject-looking individual in tattered garments, feeding some swine with ears of corn. To the right of the hall was an oriental butcher with a Turkish scimetar, slaughtering the fatted calf.

Aunt Caroline confided to me afterward, that it was because the canvas contained really three pictures, instead of only one, that she decided to secure it, adding with a triumphant smile:

"You see, my dear nephew, you have the entire allegory on one canvas!"

And there it hung—taking up almost one entire wall of the room in which, we had decided, Eleonore should spend the most of her time.

We surveyed the monstrosity in silence; in silence listened to Rika's admiring comments on the "perfectly lovely painting"; then we went to inspect the dining-room, and my study. We spent the evening in the latter cosy chamber; I read aloud to Eleonore Kinkel's exquisite "*Gruss an Mein Weib.*"

But Eleonore could not at all times use the study as a sitting-room, especially when I had business callers. At such times the poor child would bravely conquer her aversion for the "Prodigals"—thus she designated both the bipeds and quadrupeds in the picture—and with her back turned resolutely upon them, would sit in the drawing-room until my visitors had departed.

We have a large circle of acquaintances. Of course, they all called on us, and Eleonore said she always felt as if the "Prodigals" helped her "do the honors." Indeed, the picture seemed to receive the larger share of

our visitors' attention. Some of Eleonore's more intimate friends asked her why she had hung such a "very large" picture in our small drawing-room. Some, who considered it impolite to make such remarks, maintained a discreet silence; while those who thought it "good form" to talk about pictures, and to pretend a familiarity with art, would inquire if "that large painting was the work of a Münich artist"; or remark that it reminded them of something similar which they had seen in Dresden—or somewhere.

Then there were some who would observe that the same subject had been treated in so many different ways —that it was very "instructive," and so on. There was still another class of art critics. It was composed of those who knew nothing whatever about pictures, but who were quite ready to admire anything the moment they found out that somebody else admired it.

Now, there was no one in our village who was as familiar with really good pictures as myself. When any of my neighbors wanted to buy a painting, or engraving, he first consulted me; consequently the fact that I had the "Prodigal Son" hanging on my wall was sufficient to convince even those of our friends who really thought the picture an abominable daub that there must be "something in it"; and they exerted themselves manfully to discover this something.

"How very natural those swine are!" one would say.

"Just see what brilliant coloring in those clouds," another.

"How repentant the Prodigal looks," a third would remark, with the air of a *connoisseur*.

"It is really quite interesting to see those ancient fashions. Now, that tunic is really quite picturesque," and so on, until my poor little wife actually grew to despise these well-meaning art-critics.

When I came home evenings, and found Eleonore almost worn out, and would inquire tenderly what had wearied her, she would only sigh: "Oh, those Prodigals." And really, it was almost unendurable. But we could not offend dear Aunt Caroline—whose admiring

gaze always hung with devouring interest on the mammoth canvas every time she visited us—by cutting it in pieces, burning it, or hanging it in the cellar.

However, after everybody had called, and had been called on in return, there came a season of comparative peace, during which Eleonore went to pay a two-days' visit to an old school-friend.

During her absence I had the upholsterer and two of his men come and remove the Prodigals into the dining-room; and when Aunt Caroline, on her next visit, missed the picture from its accustomed place, she seemed quite downhearted. I, however, boldly declared that the light in the dining-room was much better, and that the subject—feasting—was more suitable for a dining- than a drawing-room.

Dear Aunt Caroline! she had so much faith in my reputation as an art-*connoisseur* that, notwithstanding her disappointment, she said I was quite right to move the picture.

Now, thought I with self-gratulatory feeling, Eleonore can receive her callers in comfort.

But I reckoned without my Prodigals.

Although the picture gave us less annoyance in its present position, we did not become reconciled to it. Far from it! but as I sat with my back toward it during meals, and Eleonore had only a side view, it was not so constantly obvious as it had been, and when the warm weather came, we covered it with gauze—on account of the flies!

It happened that the distinguished botanist, Doctor S——, visited our town about the holidays.

There were no flies at that time. Our guest was a most amiable man, and the friends whom we had invited to dine with him did their best to help entertain him.

During the soup he related a highly amusing adventure he had had in Egypt. When Rika removed his plate, he looked up—the Prodigals were directly opposite him—and well-bred though he was, he could not help a look of wondering surprise at sight of such a

travesty on art. He paused—stared at the picture, then, turning toward my wife, stammered confusedly:

"I—I beg pardon, madam, but—really I forget—ah, yes—it was the *officinalia*, and not the *maritima;* but the two are very easily mistaken for each other."

Naturally every glance was directed toward the object which had so confused the learned gentleman.

Eleonore declared that from the moment his eyes fell on the Prodigals the doctor talked to her as he would to a child; and she is certain that it is because of that unfortunate canvas that he did not pay us a farewell call, notwithstanding my assurance that he was hastily summoned away by a telegram.

A few days later Eleonore went to visit her mother, and while she was gone, I again sent for the upholsterer and his men, and had the picture removed to my study. To do this, I was obliged to take down about two hundred books, together with the shelves.

The light here was execrable, but that did not matter. I placed my desk so that my back was toward it, and commended my visitors of taste to the mercy of their good angels. On New Year's day, Aunt Caroline dined with us, and you may imagine her surprise when, seated in the chair Doctor S—— had occupied, she looked up and found the picture gone. She did not say a word, however.

"We hung your picture—your lovely picture, dear aunt—in my study," I answered casually, adding in my desperation: "I intend to exhibit it to my Sunday class."

The dear soul did not say anything, nor was she offended; but she appeared so melancholy that I was conscience-stricken. Before I went to bed, I tried to make amends for the detestable story I had told Aunt Caroline. I wrote to a friend of mine, and invited him to bring his Sunday class on the following Thursday evening, and drink tea with us. The invitation was accepted.

I received my friend and his scholars in the drawing-room. I asked the little fellows all sorts of questions about their studies, and Eleonore showed them our

photographs. At last came the welcome summons to tea, after which I invited the children into my study to see the picture of the Prodigal Son.

The lamps were placed in the most favorable positions. The youngsters ranged themselves in a row in front of the picture; I took up my station on one side, Herr Diebert on the other. I cleared my throat and began in a didactic tone:

"This picture, my dear children, is partly allegorical, partly realistic. These two rows of columns on either side of the centre divide the different eras of the parable. Here on the left you see the Prodigal, hungry and wretched, sharing the swine's food—as the Scriptures tell us. Here in the background you see them singing and dancing, rejoicing over the return of the Prodigal. Here, on the right, is the butcher in the act of killing the fatted calf."

While I delivered this highly instructive lecture, Herr Diebert pointed with a ruler toward the designated objects.

The silence which followed my remarks was actually oppressive. At last, one little fellow, Fritz Diegel, the butcher's son, feeling that something ought to be said, stammeringly asked: "Be them Hungarian or Bavarian hogs?"

The laughter which followed lifted the general oppressiveness, and, the clock striking nine soon afterward, Eleonore and I gave thanks for our release.

These are only a few of the many annoyances which Aunt Caroline's well-meant wedding-present brought upon us.

Fortunately, there were some very warm days in March—quite warm enough to bring to life two flies in my study. Once I should have put an end to their premature existence. I did not do so now. I fetched the gauze veil and draped it securely over the Prodigals. The next day Aunt Caroline called. Said I to her when she came into the study:

"Have you noticed, dear aunt, how very early the flies have made their appearance this spring?"

Aunt Caroline had not noticed.

I should not be adhering strictly to the truth were I to say that we were not perfectly happy in our little home. We were—even though there was hardly a forenoon, afternoon, or evening, that one of the Prodigals —either the son, one of his parents, the butcher or one of the swine—did not somehow mix in our conversation. It was not for this—although it helped somewhat—that, when summer brought my vacation, we concluded to spend it in the Black Forest.

Those were enchanting days!

Eleonore embroidered, sketched and read to her heart's content, while I wrote diligently in a new work I had begun.

Thus we passed six delightful weeks with never a thought of the Prodigals, when one morning Fate, in the person of the postman, brought me a newspaper.

"Are you Herr Treuberg?" he inquired.

"I am."

"From Immigen?"

"The same."

"Then here's something that may interest you," he added, pointing to an article in the paper. I read:

"Yesterday, in the town of Immigen, upper Bavaria, a fire consumed the residences of Frau Julie Zieber and Herr Felix Treuberg. The loss is total, partly covered by insurance."

I summoned my poor little wife, to whom I communicated as gently as possible our great loss.

We began at once to prepare for our return journey; and as our train would not leave until the afternoon, I wired a friend for further particulars of the fire.

The answer came as we were leaving the hotel:

"Fire started in the Zieber house. Unfortunately very little saved."

As I concluded this rather depressing message, Eleonore clasped my hand in both her own, and whispered assuringly: "We have each other, dear Felix, we shall not be poor—we have each other—and our love."

A few days later we were in Immigen. As we drew

near to the station, Eleonore leaned toward me, and said—smiling through her tears:

"Felix, dear—we have one comfort."

"What is it, my love?"

"We are rid of those detestable swine."

"That's so," I assented. "There is never a misfortune that has not some recompense."

I had sent word to a friend to meet us at the station. He had not come alone. There were several sympathetic acquaintances with him.

"It was so late," said my friend, referring to the fire, "and so sudden! There was a furious wind——"

"But," interrupted Herr Diebert, "one thing will give you great pleasure."

"Indeed?" exclaimed Eleonore expectantly. "What, pray?"

"You have to thank Fritz Diegel's courage for it. When all hope of saving the house was gone, he, and several of my Sunday scholars, broke open the shutters of your study window, and Fritz bravely entered the burning dwelling and cut the large painting from the frame. That was the only thing saved!"

The dangers and mortifications of masquerading are amusingly portrayed in the following story by Mrs. Hungerford ("The Duchess"). It was among her earliest works, and first appeared in *Belgravia*.

THEIR LAST RESOURCE.

CHAPTER I.

"Oh! it is more than unfortunate. I don't believe I ever was so disappointed in my life. If it had happened any other evening but this—and at the last moment too! It is really too bad." Tears of mortification stood in her eyes.

"Only what one should expect from a servant," said her sister, the Hon. Mrs. Trevenning, smoothing down a fold of her exquisite ball-gown and frowning slightly. "They are ever and always the most troublesome set on earth. It often occurs to me that they do things on purpose! Would any one, I ask you, except one's coachman, elect to break his collar-bone at ten o'clock on the night of the best ball of the season? I should think not, indeed. It is just the little bit too much."

"If you had only refused leave to Thomas this morning!"

"What could I do, my good child? He said his mother was dying, and I suppose even a footman has his feelings. One daren't be brutal nowadays."

"It looks like an artfully planned design," said Miss Dare indignantly. She stood before a mirror that reached from floor to ceiling in her sister's boudoir, and surveyed her slender figure, clad in its perfect gown, with a glance of the deepest melancholy. "To think of the hours I have spent over this dress," she said. "I believe I wore Vriere nearly to death's door; and all for nothing. No one will see it to-night."

"Well, there is nothing to be gained by crying over it," declared Mrs. Trevenning, with a touch of impatience. "My gown is as good as yours any day, and is

just as likely to blush unseen so far as to-night is concerned. I only wish I knew how I was to pay for it. Make up your mind to the inevitable, Connie, which means staying at home for this evening at least."

"I can't," declared Connie desperately. "I have dwelt too long upon this one ball to feel resigned to its loss all in a second. Oh, if anything could be done——"

Here the door was flung wide open, and a tall young man in a morning suit of gray tweed came into the room. He was rather dark, and very like Mrs. Trevenning.

"What! You, Dudley?" cried she. "And at this hour? Why, where have you come from?"

"The Manor, straight. The old boy is better, so I left him nursing the leg, and ran up to town to have a little fling before the season says good-bye. How specially festive you two look! Going anywhere?"

Mrs. Trevenning reseated herself with a little groan, and Constance made a gesture of despair.

"By Jove! Who's dead? What's wrong?" asked their brother, very properly impressed by this display of feeling.

"Everything. Everything!" cried Constance. "This very instant we have had word sent us that Martin the coachman fell in the stable half an hour ago and broke his collar-bone; Thomas, Vivienne's new footman, started early this morning to attend his mother's sick bed; and here are we, dressed to go out, and not a soul to drive us. It is the Duchess of Dartrie's ball, and the Princess is to be there, and Viv and I got gowns for it, and—altogether—it is a shame, isn't it?"

"The deuce of a sell," said Sir Dudley, with honest sympathy. "But why not try a cab for once?"

Constance looked hopefully at her sister, but Mrs. Trevenning shook her handsome head.

"Impossible! We have promised, for one thing, to call for Helen; and besides, to go there, in a cab! Oh! no, I couldn't do that."

"Well, Dudley, think of something else—do," implored his younger sister; she was his favorite, and a very pretty girl. "You might try to help us," she said.

Her face was quite tragical, and Sir Dudley, looking at it, laughed.

"Well—I will," he said. "Tell you what I'll do. Get me old Martin's coat and gloves and hat, and I'll drive you myself."

Miss Dare cast a reproachful glance at him as though disbelieving; but Mrs. Trevenning sprang to her feet and clapped her hands.

"The very thing," cried she. "Dudley, you have saved us!" She ran to the bell, and rang it sharply. "I'll order the regimentals to your old room, and the carriage to the door at once. If you tuck the rug carefully round your knees, nobody will notice your trousers."

"I earnestly hope that no one will notice me," said Sir Dudley. "That's the principal thing!"

"Good Heavens, yes!" said Mrs. Trevenning. "Dear Dudley, do be cautious. Fancy if any one were to recognize you, and it were to come out in one of those detestable society papers. What an imbroglio!" There was a gleam of hope in her eye.

"It would set you up for life," said Sir Dudley calmly. "Consider how you would be run after and pointed out for months to come. What greater bliss could fall to the share of any woman?"

His raillery was kindly, and Mrs. Trevenning, who in secret hankered wildly after notoriety, took no notice of it, beyond making a little *moue* as she passed him.

Later on, when they interviewed him in the hall preparatory to starting, he was found to be quite satisfactory. The light tweed trousers certainly militated against the perfection of his toilette, but they trusted to the friendly rug to hide this discrepancy.

"Whatever you do, don't get down," said Mrs. Trevenning, who began to feel something of the delights of private theatricals. "And for goodness' sake, don't forget your rôle for a moment. When you are opening the door for Helen, be sure you touch your hat."

"Yes M'," said Sir Dudley, in the most approved style; after which they all got down to the carriage,

two maids full of a decorous hilarity bringing up the rear, armed with cloaks and fans.

The impromptu coachman was directed to drive first to Park Lane to pick up "Helen." "Who is Helen, what is she?" thought Dudley, to whom the name conveyed no memories; but there was no time just then to ask questions. It was close on eleven o'clock. He felt rather glad he didn't know the lady mentioned, as, though it would have been difficult to make him feel shame about such an affair as this, he was obliged to confess to himself, once he was seated and had the reins in his hands, that he would be rather glad than otherwise when his self-imposed task was at an end. Yes, he wished himself well out of it. Why, if any of the four-in-hand fellows were to see and recognize him, he should never hear the last of it. And these horses of Trevenning's were not his form at all. "Sorry nags," he called the slow, respectable, well-fed beasts, who went, thought he, as though they were mourning the corpse behind them.

"You will drive quietly, won't you, Dudley?" Mrs. Trevenning had said nervously as a last word. "Not as you do on that dreadful coach. Remember, now, like a darling boy."

The darling boy smiled grimly to himself as he drove along at a funeral pace. It suggested itself to him that, if he laid down the reins and gave them their own sweet will, they would go as well as he could drive them. But fortunately he abstained from this experiment, and consequently they arrived safely at the house appointed in Park Lane where the unknown "Helen" was to be picked up.

Almost as they drew up there, the hall door was opened and a tall slight figure muffled in an eastern shawl ran down to the carriage.

"At last! I was quite afraid something had happened." The voice was girlish and very sweet, and had a curious vibration in it that thrilled the hearer. A servant followed her to open the carriage door, and whilst he was doing it, Dare caught a glimpse of her face.

Such an exquisite face! Arch, yet tender; firm, yet soft. He had no time to criticise any special feature, so quickly she turned away and was swallowed up by the carriage, but he knew her eyes were as dark as her hair, and that if he lived forever, he should never be able to forget that one sweet glimpse.

He heard, as if in a dream, some one telling him to go on again, and still in a dream he pursued his way through the lamp-lit streets, and presently drew up before an open doorway that shone more brilliantly than its companions on either side. He watched her from his post of vantage walk up the carpeted steps and disappear into the hall, and was conscious of a distinct blank when the envious walls hid her from his sight.

Another carriage coming up behind obliged him to take the horses out of the way, or probably he would even now have been staring at the steps up which she had gone; circumstances, however, were too many for him, and he was compelled to move speedily, and with as little consideration for the new-born feelings that had sprung to life within him as though he were in truth the hireling he simulated. How he got through the next few hours he never afterward remembered. All he could think of was this one fair woman; this Helen, of whom he knew nothing. Who was she? Was she Miss or Mrs.? His heart contracted as he admitted the possibility of the latter title. He could get it all out of Mrs. Trevenning in the morning of course, but in the meantime he was lost in a miserable ignorance.

Oh! Helen fair, beyond compare.

Would he ever know more of her than now he knew? He made one desperate effort to discover her identity, an effort that ended in dismal failure. Fate drove him up to a respectable middle-aged gentleman in his own (present) rank of life, who, reclining gracefully against an adjacent wall, smoked the peaceful pipe. Dare all his life had been told that nothing was hid from servants, and the idea grew upon him that perhaps this

man might tell him something of the family residing in that particular house in Park Lane from which the lovely Helen had descended.

He made himself very specially charming to the respectable man for five minutes or so, during which he sustained the entire conversation, the respectable man being engrossed with the pipe, and evidently of a taciturn disposition. He was so reserved, indeed, that he quite won on Dare, who thought him modest, and, for his state of life, refined. After a few preliminaries, therefore, he asked him if he knew who lived in such and such a house, Park Lane.

The refined man had now come to an end of his pipe, and, as Sir Dudley discovered, was more equal to conversation than he had before supposed.

"Blest if I do," said he—"beyant the fact that 'taint my gal's 'ouse. Reason of askin'? Soft on Parlor or Cookie, eh?"

Sir Dudley moved away. He now told himself he had been mistaken, and that the man had very bad manners; and he refrained from questioning any one else. No, he would trust to chance to reveal her to him.

It was the longest night he had ever spent. He wondered whether they would *ever* get tired of dancing, and assured himself it was the last time he would place himself in such a predicament. He thought bitterly of Mrs. Trevenning's staying powers when she had found a partner that suited her, and of how Connie would be safe to meet Carlton there, and, given an isolated spot in a conservatory, would straightway forget that such an important thing as Time existed.

And Helen! Was she too——? Pshaw! that way madness lay. He would not believe but that he might yet have a chance of trying his fortune with her. He could not forget her face. It was love at first sight—and a terrible attack of it. He had sneered at such an idea when other men had spoken of it as being not only possible but probable, and now——

Helen! Helen of Troy. Pooh! he didn't believe that old-world beauty could have held a candle to this

modern Venus. He was getting excited over the question, when some friendly person called aloud for Mrs. Trevenning's carriage, and he drove up with quite a rush, and saw her of whom his thoughts were full come down the steps beneath a blaze of light into the shadow below.

As a matter of fact five came down at the same moment, but Sir Dudley was too far gone to see more than one; which shows the exact difference that lies in giving way to love and wine. Constance Dare was accompanied by one young man who seemed decidedly *epris*, whilst another hung over "Helen" with an air of devotion that drove Sir Dudley to the verge of frenzy. To go for that man, to wrest from him his prize, was his sole desire. The reins slackened in his grasp, and he bent forward, oblivious of everything in his anxiety to see what was going on beneath him. This brought him within the glare of the lamps, and the man talking to Constance, lifting his head suddenly, saw him.

"Why—what?" exclaimed he spasmodically. Miss Dare, following his glance, caught his arm.

"Not a word, not a syllable. To-morrow I'll explain," whispered she, divided between fear and mirth.

This conquered peril was unknown to Sir Dudley, who still continued to glare at the back of his rival's head, as already designated "Helen's" companion. But magnetism is a power, no doubt, and this compelled the rival to turn his glance in the direction of Mrs. Trevenning's coachman. Nothing came of this, however. Dudley caught sight of *his* face first, and, starting as if shot, faced round and fell into an attitude that was anything but easy, but which permitted him to devote his entire attention to the reins.

It was Tommy Mornington!—Colonel in the Coldstreams, and the most notorious gossip about town. If he were once to get wind of this, and to—to retail it to *her* in his usual biting sarcastic way—(nasty way, by Jove!)—how should he ever be able to approach her? He kept his face rigidly averted, even from her, and sat in durance vile, until Carlton, Connie's man, called

out to him "Home." Was there a sense of smothered laughter in his tone?

He drew up with quite an old coachman-like touch at the house of Mrs. Trevenning, who got out of the carriage, as did Constance. He waited with an eager longing and a most unservant-like straining of the neck in the direction of the carriage-door to see fair Helen follow them. His astonishment became intense as he saw she did not appear, and that the other two were leaning toward the window, murmuring good-nights and good-byes, numberless. He could even see that Mrs. Trevenning leaned forward as if to kiss some one, and then drew back and looked up at him. She was the image of Sir Dudley, and had the same merry daring look in her blue eyes.

"To Park Lane—Dud—Martin," said she, and he knew by her expression, which was mischievous, that the slip was a premeditated one, meant to frighten him. But he forgave her—for was she not rendering up to his sole care for a few sweet minutes the one perfect creature upon earth?

He didn't call the horses "sorry nags" this time. Their slowness delighted him. He drove with the utmost caution—the most extraordinary care. It even occurred to fair Helen within that the Trevenning's coachman was a leech of the first water, but he could not bring himself to hurry up the horses even to please her. They were alone, he and she, as utterly alone in the great heart of town as lover's soul could desire. Separated only by a miserable partition of wood and paint and padding—a trumpery separation, that it delighted him to think he could smash into bits in no time.

In spite of himself, however, he had to get to the house at last, and with a pang he watched the tall slender figure go up to the hall door. She had left him—and this carriage, which from henceforth would be sacred to him. Should he ever see her again, once those doors opened to receive her?

Meantime the senseless doors seemed slow to grasp their prize. Fair Helen knocked, first in a reasonable

way, then loudly—then louder still. She pulled the bell with a marvellous vigor for one so delicate in face and form. But answer came there none. Sir Dudley, very much against his will, sat holding the reins, longing yet fearing to go to her assistance, and glad in the thought that he need not leave her until he saw her safely indoors. Presently it began to dawn upon him that this would not be immediately.

Again she knocked: again she rang with quite the same result. He was watching her anxiously, and now he saw that she turned her face to him with a suspicion of nervousness in her manner, and as though she found comfort in the knowledge that he was still there. That glance undid him! The unconscious appeal in her eyes made him oblivious of all other considerations, and springing down from his seat he hastened to her side.

"Allow me," he said gently, and taking the knocker from her fingers, beat a resounding rat-a-tat-tat upon the door. He was delighted with the knocker. Action of any sort that would be in her service he was longing for just then, and, nothing else presenting itself, he worked off this longing on the unoffending door. He was indeed so engrossed with his desire to awake the sleeping household that he quite forgot that state of life into which he had entered to oblige his sisters, and was therefore the more startled and confounded when presently he found her eyes fixed upon him with an intensity suggestive of astonishment. Her expression was a curious blending of surprise and bewilderment, and there was too, he thought, a little uneasiness in it.

It all flashed upon him in a second. There he stood, in the Trevenning livery from the knees up, and for the rest there was light tweed trousers and a pair of boots that servants as a rule do not aspire to! He became at the same time conscious that his gloves were absurdly too big for him, and that the hat was ludicrous on his head, at all events, whatever it might be on that of the venerable Martin. Truly this mad freak of his was costing him dear! In one wild moment he felt that to cut and run was all that was left him, but presently he rallied.

"I'm afraid they are all asleep, M'," he said, being so desirous of making a point of the respectful M' that he overdid it terribly, and left matters worse than they were before.

"I'm afraid so too," replied she steadily, though she still regarded him with an evident distrust that seemed to grow as the moments waned. "My maid was to have sat up for me, but I suppose she—— Will you knock again, please?"

He *did* knock again, with redoubled ardor this time. He was as anxious now as she was to get the confounded door open. That distrustful glance had hurt him sorely. He felt all the time he was hammering away at the knocker that her eyes were fixed on the unlucky trousers, and as for the hat——. Once again memory rose to make him wretched. He recollected the fatal likeness that existed between him and Mrs. Trevenning, and he jammed down the big hat well over his brow with a view to concealing from her the family features. If he failed in this, he succeeded at all events in making himself grotesque in an unusually high degree.

The knocking rang through the empty air, and dying away left an unnatural silence behind it. The day had broken, and now a still, pale, ghostly light crept slowly over the housetops and trembled through the streets. The sweet cold smell of dawn came to them through all the smoke and depression of the great city beyond, and yet it seemed to them that the beauty of the fresh young morn had something of sadness in it. The stillness was almost oppressive. Fair Helen stood motionless, a little pale; while Sir Dudley, in his motley garments, waited with a throbbing heart for some sound—a footstep—inside this terrible door, that should put an end to a moment so charged with difficulties. What an unearthly quiet! Why did she not say something?

Suddenly, with an appalling yell such as a cat alone can give, a lean grimalkin rushed across the street, and disappeared into some unseen corner. It was a wicked, vengeful cry, and so startled Fair Helen that she in-

stinctively shrank backward, and a faint exclamation broke from her lips.

"Oh! will they *never* open the door?" she said faintly. He caught a hurried glance so full of nervous suspicion that it horrified him. Good Heavens! That she should look at him like that. He could not tell, of course, that with the hat thus pressed upon his forehead, and coming down almost to his nose, he looked like nothing so much as a burglar, unless it might be a murderer; and felt a rather hurt astonishment that she should so unkindly regard him.

As he still pondered on this, there came at last a distant sound from within: nearer it came, until there could be no mistake at all about its being a footstep.

"*Ah!*" cried she, with such an undeniable air of relief that Dudley knew himself finally crushed. The door was opened by a frightened sleepy maid, and Helen stepped quickly into the safe shelter of the hall. As she went, something fell from her with a tinkling sound upon the pavement. It was her fan. Sir Dudley stooped, picked it up, and handed it to her.

Standing under the hall lamp as she was, with some soft lace falling back from her dark head, and with a warm flush upon her cheeks, she looked even lovelier than he had before seen her. Was she as cruel as she was beautiful? Perhaps she saw the touch of reproach in his eyes.

"Oh, thank you," she said hurriedly, taking the fan. She made him a faint, hesitating salutation—which afterward occurred to him as being somewhat strange—and he—*raised his hat! The* hat! Martin's hat! It was flabby at the brim, and there was a difficulty about the doing of this every-day act, but certainly he *raised* it. Once again fair Helen fixed upon him a questioning gaze, more boldly this time because of the presence of her maid, and Sir Dudley, with the only bit of wisdom he had betrayed all through, beat a hasty retreat.

As he went home, he wondered where he should see her again. Mrs. Trevenning would of course be able to manage it for him, but somehow he decided on say-

ing nothing to either of his sisters about her. There would be Lady Bellingham's ball to-morrow night—nay, to-night rather. She *might* be there, and if so, would she recognize him? This was an awful probability, and yet he could not bring himself to hope she would entirely forget him.

CHAPTER II.

He had just completed a flowery little speech expected of him by Lady Bellingham, who still considered herself young and lovely, and had stepped aside to prop himself against a friendly wall, when he saw "her" enter the room—she was already only that eloquent pronoun to him. If fair on that last hour he saw her, she was ten times fairer to-night in a lace gown, diaphanous, ivory-tinted, with here and there a purple bunch of the big czar violet lost in its soft folds. She was smiling, and it seemed to Dare as if he had been blind to the sweetness of her eyes last night. Her skin was like the wild rose, and her hair strayed loosely over a thoughtful and therefore beautiful brow.

He went up to Lady Bellingham presently, and asked for an introduction to "the charming girl over there in the white gown."

"They are all in white frocks," said Lady Bellingham, "like a set of silly débutantes. I never saw so much white in a room before. You will have to be a little more explicit." She spoke petulantly. She was growing stouter every day, and white was now beyond her.

"I wish I could," said Dudley laughing. "But the fact is I don't know her name." He had adhered to his resolution not to question his sisters about her. "See, *there*," he went on hastily—"there she is now, with Sir Charles Lamprey."

"Oh, Helen. Helen Bellasis. She is a cousin of mine." She glanced at him with an amused smile. "*Another!*" she said. "You are the ninth man who has implored my assistance, and she has been only five

minutes in the room. She is a great success, isn't she? This is her first season, and already everybody wants to marry her."

Sir Dudley's heart rose. She was not married, then! Immediately afterward it sank to zero. If they were *all* at her feet, what chance had he?

"Be warned in time," Lady Bellingham was saying gayly. "She is a witch, a siren. Steel your heart, or, better still, flee temptation."

"I feel how good it is of you to take all this trouble about me," said Sir Dudley mildly. "I am indeed grateful; but," with a sudden smile, "if you can manage that introduction, I shall be even more grateful still."

"You know no fear, then. You think yourself irresistible," said she with a shrug. "The world has spoiled you." And indeed, Sir Dudley, being without incumbrances and master of a very pretty income, had known what it was to be affectionately treated by dowagers, maidens and frisky matrons.

"Coming from you that is unkind," replied he in a low tone. "Have *you* found me 'irresistible'?" The tender reproach in his tone pleased her.

"Tut!" she said, throwing up her handsome head. And then: "Wilful man must have his way, I suppose. Come then, and let me make you known to Helen."

She moved forward, and Dudley followed her. A few moments later saw him standing before Miss Bellasis, her card in his hand. He had not found the courage to look at her whilst the introduction was going on, but now he stole a glance at her, to find she was gazing at him rather too attentively. He grew honestly confused.

"I have ventured to put my name down here," he said, indicating the solitary vacancy upon her card.

"Yes?" She held out her hand for the card, and leisurely read what he had written. "Do you know," she said slowly, "I have rather a curiosity to know your name." She might mean little or nothing by this speech; she might mean a great deal. Dare felt that

he was changing color. At this particular moment the waltz then being played came to an abrupt end, as some waltzes will, and after a while Sir Dudley, offering her his arm, led her away to a conservatory.

When in the dimly lit conservatory, she sank upon a lounge, opened her fan in a leisurely fashion and suddenly turned her eyes full on his.

"I can't explain it," she said deliberately, "it is the strangest thing—yet I cannot help fancying that I have seen you somewhere before."

"The most natural fancy possible," he said, "the Row is open to us all, and when one goes to two or three balls in a night, why——"

"I do not think it was in the Row or at a ball I met you," interrupted she softly; "though of course," with a presumably backward glance into her memory, "it might have been in the Row. However—it wasn't."

"Perhaps," said he, though he knew he was reddening like a wretched schoolboy, "you can recollect when it was that I was so happy as to come within your notice."

"If I could remember, surely you could," she said. She leaned toward him. "Have you ever seen *me* before?" she asked impressively.

"Seen you?" he repeated her question in a stammering fashion, and then stopped short. Somehow he felt as if he could not tell her a lie—as if he could not deny the joy he had gained by his first glance at her. He grew silent, and stood there before her frowning perplexedly and most evidently embarrassed.

"Ah! you have," said she.

She moved quickly, and in doing so the lace flounces of her gown were caught and entangled by the prickly leaves of a cactus standing near. She tried to extricate herself from the treacherous grasp, but unsuccessfully. Dudley went hurriedly to the rescue. He bent over her.

"Allow me," he said. The two ordinary words struck an answering chord. When had he last used them? She lifted her head as he set her free, and said quickly—

"Now, I know it!"

He grew rather pale. Did she know it? and whence came that strange little gleam that shone in her eyes? She did not say anything more or volunteer any information as to this sudden knowledge that had flowed in upon her, and Dudley, who was now as one sitting on thorns, made up his mind to learn the worst at once. Anything was better than this nervous suspense.

"So you have found it out," he said. "You have discovered either me—or—my double."

"Your double. Certainly not you," she laughed; and reseated herself with all the air of one who is about to tell you a good thing. "Why, it is the most absurd fancy," she said. "And you must really promise not to be offended, but the fact is your sister Mrs. Trevenning —she is your sister, isn't she? Well, she has the most eccentric coachman in the world."

"Indeed!" said he. He went down for a moment, and then rose again and struck out boldly. "Is it the eccentric coachman I resemble?"

"Ah! do not be offended at that. You need not. To tell the truth, it is a marvellous resemblance. But there is quite a little history connected with that coachman, which, if you like, I shall tell you."

He hastened to say it would give him infinite delight to hear anything from her lips; whereupon she ran through a light account of what was already too well known to him.

"Just now," she said as she finished it, "when you said 'Allow me,' it reminded me of the time when he ran up the steps and took the knocker out of my hand without 'by your leave,' or 'with your leave.' He seemed a dangerous person to argue with, so I made no protestation. Surely," smiling, "you are not dangerous, and yet"—reflectively—"both in voice and feature you resemble him. You must not be angry about this, because, as I have already hinted, he was a coachman quite out of the common."

Again the clear eyes looked into his. Could it be possible for such sweet orbs to betray malicious amusement?

"Of course I am to be congratulated in that he wasn't the ordinary sort," said he, with an assumption of cheerful indifference that did him credit.

Miss Bellasis leaned back in her chair and played idly with her fan. Was she about to quit the distasteful subject? He racked his brain to try to find something interesting that should help her to this end, but even as he racked it, she spoke.

"Do you know," she said innocently, "I think the Trevenning livery is the funniest I know. Who invented it? Whoever it was deserves public recognition. Light-gray trousers and a scarlet-colored coat with white facings. Surely it is unique."

"I don't know much about it," said he. "I haven't gone into that sort of thing. But certainly what you say does sound uncommonly queer. You should reason with Mrs. Trevenning on the subject, who, it appears, is rather a friend of yours?"

"Quite the dearest. We haven't a secret from each other, she and I."

She looked at him as she said this, and whether his expression amused her it would be impossible to say, but at all events she broke suddenly into a low delicious laugh.

"Isn't it nice to have a friend like that?" she asked.

"I think it would be very nice to have a friend like you."

She passed this over hurriedly.

"After all, I don't think I shall speak to Mrs. Trevenning about the livery," said she. "The Trevennings are not new people that they should care what the world says. And besides——. Oh! by-the-by, there is one other thing about that remarkable coachman I quite forgot to tell you. Another touch of eccentricity. When leaving, he took off his hat to me. He didn't touch it, you will understand; he really tried to lift it. But it was too much for him, it resisted his most earnest efforts. Poor man! It suggested itself to me this morning that perhaps he had once been in better circumstances; might have been almost a gentleman."

"He might," said Sir Dudley, grimly. He was now in a rage with himself. How on earth had he ever let himself in for such a miserable sell? To act coachman to his own sisters; there wasn't even the element of romance in it. He might have known he couldn't act the part decently. To take off his hat! What an utter fool he had made of himself!

"I'm sure of it," said Miss Bellasis, warmly. "There was quite a little air in the way he tried to take off that hat. In fact"—she paused and lifted her eyes to his—"I wasn't half surprised enough, when afterward he put out his hand to bid me good-night!"

"What? Oh! I say, I know I didn't go as far as that," cried Sir Dudley impetuously.

It was all over then. Too late he stopped short. Miss Bellasis rose to her feet.

"You! What have you to do with it?" demanded she.

"Just this"—his glance grew beseeching—"I was that coachman!"

She moved back, as if in horror.

"You!" she said. And then again—"You! And how, sir, is it that I now see you here masquerading in your master's clothes?"

"No, no! They are my own, I assure you," stammered he; whereupon the sternness she would have sustained fled from her, and the pretty eyes gave place to the laughter that was consuming them. For yet a little while she struggled with herself, and then subsided behind her fan.

"You knew it. You knew it all the time," cried he, reproachfully, yet with a sense of extraordinary relief. He drew away with a determined hand the fan she held, and looked accusatively into her lovely, riante face.

"Not last night indeed," exclaimed she; "acquit me of that. But—this morning——"

"Yes. Go on. Who told you then?"

"Captain Carlton. He recognized you as you waited so patiently beneath the Duchess's lamps." Patiently! she little knew! "And what are you ashamed of, then?"

said she. "It was a mere freak after all, and I, for one, owe you a debt of gratitude; I should not have gone to that ball but for you, and—a man has been known to drive his sisters before this."

"But hardly as their servant. However, I was not ashamed of it until—I saw you."

"Oh! what have I to do with it?" said she. But she had the grace to blush as she said it, and, for the first time, she avoided his eye.

"Everything. Not only with this absurd episode, but," earnestly, "with my whole life."

It was in effect a proposal, and Miss Bellasis grew very grave.

"We have been here a long time, have we not?" she said, rising slowly. "I am afraid I must ask you to take me back now to my aunt, Lady Bellasis."

"One word," entreated he. "Are you staying with her, with Lady Bellasis? Yes? Then may I call, to-morrow?"

"On her? I am sure"—gravely—"auntie will be very pleased to receive you."

"Ah!" said he, "that is something, but it is not enough. Shall I see you? Will you be pleased to receive me?"

"You ask a great deal," she said, but she smiled. "Have you forgotten that this is our first meeting?"

"Our second, rather."

"Is that other to be counted? Well, our second then."

One hand was hanging by her side. He took it, and held it gently between both his own. His face as he did this was so earnest that she could not be angry with him.

"Helen," he besought her, "say you will be glad to see me."

"How do you know my name?" She looked surprised, and blushed vividly.

"I heard Constance call you so; and having seen you, how could I forget anything that related to you. Helen! Tell me? I may come to-morrow."

"Yes, come," she answered softly.

The author of this exciting story of the chase is unknown. Every hunter should read it.

A BIG BUCK.

I MET my friend Jack N. at a wedding in South Kentucky. It was a rollicking festivity, held at the house of a wealthy tobacco-planter, who was giving away his last and youngest daughter to a fresh, manly-looking young fellow, who was, as usual, a second, or third cousin; for your true Virginian never marries "out of the family," and every planter in South Kentucky was a Virginian, of course.

Amidst the merry crowd, I very soon made out the tall, lank figure of my friend Jack N., whom I had not met for several years. Indeed it would be difficult to mistake him in any crowd, for he was as lean and as sharp as a rail-splinter, with his beaklike nose, and projecting chin. There was about him, too, the decided, haughty carriage of the high-blooded animal, and with his head thrown back in a hearty, fox-hunting guffaw, there was something indescribably keen, game, and dashing in his appearance.

As I expected, when I approached him I found him in the midst of a glowing description of his last run with his dogs, and closely surrounded by an eager audience of young men, for Jack was no great hand with the women.

"Spot" had just seized a big "ten-prong" buck on the bound, by the throat, and brought him to his knees, when Jack caught my eye. The names of "Music," "Sound," and "Rattler" died away upon his tongue, in thick-coming utterance, as he stared at me for a moment of doubtful recognition.

"Halloa! Charlie W.! by old Bell-Mouth!" (Jack always swore by his favorite slow-track dog, Bell-Mouth, who never gave tongue on a false trail.) "Why, my boy, how are you? Just in time—the bucks

are just in the 'blue.' The dogs are as lean as I am, and as fierce as starved tigers for a chase!"

"I'm your man!—but lean as you are, Jack, why, you make them carry weight in a high wind, don't you? Glad to see you, by my faith! They say you've got the finest pack west of the Alleghanies, now!"

"West of the Alleghanies! Pshaw! man, nothing to equal them on top of the sod! Twenty-five, all told, with throats like the trump of resurrection! When they open in full blast, they make the hills skip like young lambs—and the trees bend before the sound, like in a hurricane! I tell you, they make the Mississippi walk up stream, and the catfish stand straight up on their tails, out of the water, to listen to them."

"That'll do, Jack! When do you go back home?"

"Start in the morning—you'll be all ready?—Won't let you off under three weeks—We have the cream of the hunting season now?"

"Won't promise for all that time—but I will be ready for you in the morning!"

"That's a good boy! bring nothing but your rifle—if you want birds, I have guns enough, and Ponto's nose is as keen as a brier!"

A two days' ride through the wild and picturesque "Barrens" brought us to the banks of the Mississippi River. Here we entered upon a long deep stretch of land, covered with the most tremendous forest I ever saw. It extended from Columbus, or the "Iron Banks" as they are called, up some thirty miles, nearly parallel with the present course of the Mississippi—though greatly elevated above the present bottom. From seven to ten miles in width, this singular tongue of land was without a single inhabitant, except the settlement of the N.'s, about a mile from Columbus —though composing some of the richest land of the State—from the fact of its being an old military reserve, and covered, as Jack said, "six deep with titles," —which had sufficed to keep at bay even the unscrupulous squatters—so that it was literally given over to the

possession of wild animals, and constituted the greatest hunting-ground within hundreds of miles.

Here, the N.'s—who were a wealthy and aristocratic "Old Dominion" stock—had opened a large plantation, immediately upon the river bank, where it descended three hundred feet, perpendicularly to the water.

From the portico of the Mansion-House placed upon this lofty perch, you could command a clear view of the majestic river, to its junction with the Ohio, thirty miles above. This was no insignificant sight, you may rest assured, with sometimes twenty steamboats in view at a time.

Such a hullaballoo as greeted us when we alighted at the gate! The hounds had first discovered us, and to the shout of their master gave us a reverberating echo. Then the picaninnies came pouring in sooty legions out of the cabins of the extensive "quarter" which flanked the mansion in the back-ground—their black, shiny faces, stretched in yells and grins, exhibiting an ivory ecstasy of delight at the return of "Massa Jack" —while the hounds nearly tumbled us into the dirt, with their rude gambols. In a moment the whole plantation seemed alive, and Jack's favorite hunter Lara, which had the freedom of the yard, came prancing into the mêlêe.

The ladies of the hospitable mansion met us at the door, and I was greeted with that gentle and high-bred frankness for which the true Virginia woman has always been noted — which has that indescribably motherly and sisterly something in it, which makes the stranger feel at once that he has found home.

After his mother and three lovely young sisters, Jack's next greeting was to his mulatto foster-mother, who stood, with a loving and humble smile upon her good-looking face, in the back-ground, along with her son, Jack's foster-brother and body-servant, Cato.

Then to supper.

Ah! that delicious supper! the fresh, juicy venison, the cakes of grated green corn, kneaded in its own sweet milk by some mysterious process, known only to

Virginia women—and coffee that was a redistillation of nectar, thickened with golden cream!

Then to bed.

Cato roused us, with the dawn; and we went out to see the dogs fed, preparatory for the morning hunt. It was, indeed, a magnificent pack, such as I had never seen together before. Twelve of them were of the same family, and of great size and power, standing very high upon their legs, and marked with great uniformity with black spots, upon a pure white ground.

"Spot," the sire and leader of this noble group, was of a pure white body, with a single black spot in the centre of the forehead—from which he took his name. He was a most powerful animal, and able to cope with the largest buck, alone. He was a stag-hound, carefully crossed upon the short-legged and long-bodied fox-hound.

"Music"—the dam—was a fox-hound of the "true Spartan breed," with a voice like a distant alarm-bell; while the organ of old "Spot" was as sonorous as the boom of "old ocean" against hollow cliffs.

But, among them all, my eye instantly detected a magnificent creature—a black tan hound, that to me seemed absolutely perfect, as a specimen of canine symmetry. His coat was as fine as the most glossy silk; from his head, which was pointed like a serpent's, his fine, broad, and thin ears, with their great swelling veins, depended more than an inch below the tip of his nose. His neck, like a young stag's; his chest, barrel-ribbed, and deep as a panther's; his loins, as clean as a gray-hound's, with a broad, strong back; limbs that seemed to have been hammered by some wondrous skill out of fine steel; and such a voice! bugles, clarions, cymbals, bells, winds, waters, echoes, mingled, clashing, rolling, roaring, in one tide of rushing sound; altogether, they were nothing to that voice! "Nowhere, nor nothing!" as Jack exclaimed, "to the voice of 'Black Terror,' and 'Smile,'" as he named a beautiful tan slut of smaller size, which stood beside this noble animal.

The history of this splendid couple was a singular one, as Jack gave it to me on the spot.

He was sitting in the portico one morning, looking out over the river, which was very much swollen, and filled with drift-wood. He observed some strange, black objects, which seemed to be struggling with the current. He called to Cato for his spy-glass, and saw at once that they were two animals of some sort, which were trying hard to climb upon the drift-wood in the middle of the mighty stream.

Here was an adventure, at any rate; and, followed by Cato, Jack descended the steep bank of the river. When he reached the water, he found that his boat had been torn away by the current. Jack was staggered but for a moment, when the low plaintive howl of a hound reached him across the waters.

It was a terrible venture; but Jack's coat was off in a minute, and, looking round at Cato, he only heard him say, "Go in, Massa Jack, I'm here," when he plunged into the turbid current, followed by the brave boy. Jack said that, if it had been a man's voice, it could not have "hurt him" more than the sound of that hound's plaintive howl.

After having nearly lost their lives, they succeeded in bringing the two hounds, which were coupled together by a chain, to shore, some four miles below, by the help of the drift-wood, which they pushed before them. The poor animals were nearly exhausted, and had probably been in the water for many hours.

Jack vowed that a whole plantation couldn't buy them. They had probably fallen from some steamboat, and had got caught by their chain to the drift-wood, which had prevented them from swimming ashore.

The whole kennel was fed upon bread exclusively, during the hunting season, and were never permitted to touch any meat except what they themselves killed. This kept them in fine bottom and wind for running, and made them very savage.

. . . . . .

A delicious breakfast is rapidly dispatched, the horn is sounded, and we are off for our stands in the deep forest.

Cato, who "drives," turns to the left, at the corner of the plantation, followed by the whole pack, while we follow a bridle-path, leading straight ahead, into the depths of the forest.

In a half-a-mile I am stationed just on the verge of the "old bank," as it is called, of the river, with the deep forest, through which Cato is driving, on my left, and, on my right, after a sheer descent of twenty feet, a tremendous swamp, which was now dry, except where traversed by deep lagoons filled with quicksands. Jack rode on a half mile farther to his stand. My instructions were, not to let the hounds pass my stand, if I missed the deer, which would attempt to get by me into the almost impenetrable swamps, where, if the dogs followed him, they would be lost for the remainder of the day.

I had not long to wait; for I could just begin to hear my heart beat in the restored silence, and a neighboring squirrel had only just commenced barking at me, when a low and distant bay, followed by a faint whoop, showed that a trail had been struck. Gradually the sounds gathered, as voice after voice joined in, until at last the thunder bass of old Spot boomed out, and old Music followed with a blast; and now the clashing clangor of Black Terror's tongue led off the bursting symphony, and the forest rang to reverberations which startled the heart into my very throat.

Peal on peal, and now a sudden silence—my blood is running like mill-tails through the swollen veins, and the arteries throb almost to bursting. Crash! there it goes again! Heavens! what music! How the leaves flutter, and the trees sway to my vision!

"Whoop!" in a smothered gasp. If I could only yell! Here they come; I wonder the forest isn't leveled before the mighty roll of sound! Ha! lost again! No! it is only muffled as they go down some valley! Now they rise again! ye gods! if I could only

give one yell! How it deafens! they must be right upon me! they will be running over me, deer, dogs, and all! I am no Actæon! Oh, hurricanes, and thunder-claps—hist! here he comes! and out bounded, within ten feet of me, a tremendous buck, with his mighty antlers, like forest-trees, thrown back upon his rump! He has paused an instant.

Crack! away with one prodigious bound, he clears the twenty feet of bank, and is crashing through the swamp.

What a roar! here they are! bristles up, tongues out, Black Terror ten paces ahead, Spot next, then Music, and all the rest in a crowd, looking savage as harried wolves. You might as well talk of stopping the Mississippi—they have smelt the blood—what a terrific burst! Black Terror's leap is as long as the buck's! Old Spot roars again! They are out of sight! That's Jack's yell. Hark! his horse's feet, already! He is coming, furious, because I did not stop the buck!

And furious he was, sure enough! I began to exclaim at the top of my voice, before he came in sight, but it was of no use. He comes clattering up, and nearly rides me down.

"Why the deuce didn't you stop that deer! Are the dogs gone? Black Terror will never stop. Confusion, man! were you asleep?"

"He was as big as an elephant, Jack. Here's plenty of blood," said I, trying to appear cool, and pointing to the ground, with my gun, "he's done for!"

Jack sprang to his feet and examined the signs. "Oh, thunder! you have shot him too far back, and through the loins; he will take to the river—what a track! It must be the 'big buck.' I shall lose Black Terror! Come ahead, and let's cut him off before he gets there, if we kill our horses!" And away he dashed through the wood.

I followed as fast as possible, and such a ride as that was! Through vine-matted thickets, over dead trees, leaping at break-neck speed the wide lagoons,—away! away! we clattered, foaming through the dense swamp like wild men possessed of demons.

At length we burst upon open ground, and Jack gave a yell that would have waked the dead. "Too late! too late! the Big Buck, by old Bell-Mouth! he'll take the river."

Jack's yell had slightly startled the buck, which was making for the river, along the bank of a wide lagoon. He turned sharp, and attempted to leap the lagoon, he disappears—on we rush, at mad speed—but Jack knows what he is about, and his horse too—while my mare leaps. Plump, we land in the middle of the lagoon, followed by a roar of laughter from Jack.

"Next time, shoot farther forward, if you please, old boy!"

But it was no joking matter for me—we had landed in a quicksand. I looked around with an expression of terror at Jack, for I felt my mare sinking under me.

"Catch that limb above you," shouted he, "and tie your bridle to it, or you will both go under."

There was no time for mincing matters. I let go my gun, which sunk out of my sight forever. Rising in my saddle, with a desperate effort I reached the stout limb of a bending cotton-wood tree, which I dragged down, and to which I managed to secure my bridle by a strong knot. I succeeded finally by the aid of the cotton-wood, in reaching the bank, and by this time, when I looked back, I found that my poor mare had sunk nearly up to her eyes.

I now looked round, and saw Jack, busy enough, between beating off the dogs and attempting to secure the buck, which had stuck fast also in the quicksand. He succeeded in throwing a rope about his horns, and when the "driver" came up, we dragged it out at our leisure, after having rescued my poor "Celeste," which from hanging so long by her head-stall, had grown quite black in the face.

The buck was a prodigious animal, and had several times before been chased by Jack, when it always took to the river, and had thus lost him several fine hounds.

Life on Wall Street is not overflowing with romance, unless the rise and fall of fortunes may be included in that term. The course of "Gasparina," in the following story written for ROMANCE by Helen Churchill Candee, threw a delightful romance into the street; but her example is not commended as one to be followed. One suspects that she really did not make much money. "The Junior Partner" was probably the final source of the enormous dividends which she realized.

THE JUNIOR PARTNER.

"BRADLEY AND CLINTON, BROKERS," was the sign on the office door, but there was no need to hang a sign on George Clinton, the junior partner, to tell the world that he was a broker, for that fact was patent. His keen, quick eyes, his manner of nervous intensity told that, and he had about him a restraint and frigidity that mark the man of business talent. He was as brightly cool as the electric lamps, that early in winter evenings were lighted outside in the street before he left the office; as cool as they, and as powerful with concealed force.

Bradley thought there was a magnetism about this unexpressed strength, for what else drew people toward the self-contained man, who seemed lacking in all affection and brotherly love.

The office clock showed three-quarters after two, only fifteen minutes before the Exchange would close. Clinton stepped quickly up to the ticker; his footsteps almost snapped, they were so crisp on the still tense office silence. He read on the tape "35⅜, 500 shares," appended to the name of his pet stock, a drop of two points since morning. Again the crisp step back to his desk.

"Mr. Petrie, ring for a messenger," he said briefly, bending his smooth-shaven face intently over the papers before him which his long, delicate fingers were sorting. The sharp click of a closing watch-case told Bradley that Clinton was counting the minutes. He never trusted other time-keepers than his own watch—the

office-clock was for office-boys. A look at his clear-cut profile and flexible nostrils revealed a nervous tension the result of which is quick decision and unerring action. He was almost boyish in appearance, if that can be said of a slender, light-haired man of forty, but his bearing conveyed the idea of force, which was confirmed by his quick perception and instantaneous action. His self-control was perfect, but at the same time evident. A compression of the lips, and a quick, rabbit-like movement of the thin nostrils, showed when nerve and tongue were only held in check by strongest effort.

Bradley was different, being slow and pacific always, and besides, being a gentleman and ten years older than Clinton, he was exempt from the lash of his tongue, which was as a hot electric wire in its ability to cut and sting. Clinton could stand anything better than stupidity. That exasperated him beyond the bounds of that respect for others' feelings which, Bradley contended, was the right even of a clerk. And yet Clinton was the better liked of the two men.

The office-door flew open, and a blue uniform appeared. "Call?" asked the boy with unemotional brevity.

"Mr. Petrie," said Clinton's distinct, never too loud voice, "take charge of this matter for me and give the messenger his directions—I am going out. Mr. Bradley, I have just time" (again on the tense air the click of the watch-cover) "to buy more of that preferred stock at a low figure, before the Exchange closes."

Young Petrie was Bradley's nephew, and one of Clinton's frequent causes of annoyance by reason of his better capabilities for dress than for business. He looked up now surprised at being trusted with an important commission, seeing which, Clinton added cuttingly, "I hope, Mr. Petrie," he always preserved an unvarying formality with his underlings, "I hope I am not taxing you too much." Petrie colored all over his pretty blond face. He had not deserved a rebuke. Only Bradley knew that it was Clinton's nerves, and not Petrie's delinquencies, that were making the sarcasm.

Clinton turned quickly, locked the safe, took up his hat and, with purposeful steps, crossed toward the outer door. Then, seized with an after-thought, he turned back, every muscle conscious of the loss of time, and unlocked the safe. While his back was turned, the door slowly and silently opened. He was scarcely conscious of it until aroused by a slender black figure standing by him. He looked up, with his lips showing a nervous action at one corner, looked and saw a woman, slight, girlish and beautiful with the languorous beauty of the South, yet in her face that indescribable look which combines innocence and varied experience.

Clinton's blue-gray eyes had been called flinty, but as he looked into the dark, timid, lifeless eyes before him, he melted, smiled slightly without the usual satirical curve of the mouth-corners, and said briefly, "What can I do for you?"

Bradley and the clerks marveled, for Clinton hated woman customers. Coquetry and coupon-cutting were not compatible, he once said with alliterative irony.

"I am Mme. dos Santos," she said simply, and paused as if for an answering recognition. Clinton's face wore the look of one who listens perforce to a sharp high note continuously repeated, eagerly awaiting a change.

"Well?" he queried briefly, but with less than his habitual asperity.

"When I left Chili, my brother, Fernando Carvaljo, told me to come to you if I were ever in trouble here," she continued explanatorily, but with increasing embarrassment, while opening a small, silver-mounted reticule and producing therefrom five one-hundred-dollar notes.

Clinton looked long at the now down-cast eyes, which had been raised just long enough to show their impenetrable darkness. The lids would not lift again, although the fine curved brows rose often. Clinton looked and softened. "You want me to invest this? To speculate with it?" he asked.

Then her eyes lifted gratefully, and her pathetic mouth parted in a quick smile. "You are too good,"

she said briefly, "and see how rude I am to trouble you."

Bradley and young Petrie both glanced at the office-clock at the same time, and then their eyes met. Petrie's eyes had in them a victorious flash as though he had caught a weasel napping. Everyone in the office made evident efforts at concealment of his astonishment, and desk-drawers opened and shut with significant vehemence.

Five minutes before three, and Clinton had lost his opportunity for that *coup* which was to have ended the day's business. He nervously re-locked the safe upon Mme. dos Santos' mite, and, after a moment's low-toned talk with her, the two passed out.

That was only the beginning, and all that the office saw of it, but it was evident that some force was at work with Clinton. He was as active as ever and as quick an operator in his business, where nervous alacrity is one of the essentials, but although as steel-like as of old, it was more with the properties of a fine spring than of a stiletto. Young Petrie looked pale and ill one day, and Clinton suggested tersely that he need not report for duty until the day after the morrow. A child, a poor, ugly little drift, crept hesitatingly into the office one rainy day, with dubiously stale flowers to sell. Bradley would have turned her out from habit, but Clinton beckoned her in and bought her faded posy, smiling coaxingly to awaken brightness in her dull, dark eyes.

"Mr. Clinton will be translated shortly," whispered Petrie daringly to the bookkeeper.

Mme. dos Santos had applied to Clinton for help, relying on him for it, expecting kindness from him. There is something in every man that makes him want to live up to a high opinion others may have formed of him. The position was a little novel for Clinton. He had always been so much alone that no one had depended upon him. He was alone with that utter isolation that is obtainable only in a great hotel, where for seventeen years he had been known only as No. 265,

and where he had been immured from all contact save that which he deliberately sought. So when he saw how absolutely this little lady trusted him, all his latent chivalry was awakened. She was indeed in need of a friend. Her husband had died six years before, leaving some New York properties besides his Chilian possessions, and now it had become necessary for her to attend to them personally. Besides this, the political disturbances of her country made a long absence seem desirable. Her mother and younger sister had undertaken the journey with her, but the former had died on the voyage. Then there was some trouble about the New York property, and Madame found herself in need. That was all. A poor little history and told quite simply, one event at a time, while Clinton sat in her little apartment which overlooked the Park. It was a new rôle to him, this of coaxing confidences, he who had always been impatient of hesitation.

He had known her brother in a South American transaction long ago, but had quite forgotten him in the strain of business life. Carvaljo's family he had never met.

"Gasparina is my little name," she said with pretty dignity when one day it became necessary for her to sign a paper; and as she lingered softly over the syllables, the sound was sweet, and it stayed in Clinton's ears all day and quite hushed his own voice when he opened his lips for too quick an address to Petrie. Those were uncertain times with the market, and the nervous tension was intolerable and reflected itself in the manner of the junior partner.

As the shortening days brought winter, and with it a longing for cosy fireside comforts, Clinton often and oftener staid in the train, on his way up-town in the afternoon, until the Fifty-eighth Street station was reached, from which a short walk brought him to Gasparina's apartment. He trembled slightly sometimes after a trying day's strain, thinking as he went up in the elevator how penetrating and cold the outside air was. It was always bright in Gasparina's sitting-

room, even though the sun was hidden, for she had put bits of colored draperies about, *chiffons* that she had picked up in her country, where color counts more than form; and the soft-coal fire was never allowed to get too low. Near the fire was a low tea-table. Clinton always took from her a cup of tea—although he had supposed his antipathy to tea ineradicable,—because the pouring of it seemed to suit the hands of the woman opposite him. They were not white hands, almost brown one might say, but were small, delicately-rounded and long, and had gentle, effectual movements when not lying quiet in her lap. He silently compared them with his own, whose too thin fingers were twisting with rapid motion an Assyrian seal hanging from his watch-chain.

Blanquita, the younger sister, sat indolently at the window, looking across the tree-tops in the Park to where the exiled obelisk points derisively at unaccustomed winter skies. She had not yet cared to learn English, and all that her sister and that rather grave man by the hearth said was of no interest to her.

One day Clinton brought with him an envelope in his inner pocket. Had Bradley been there, he would have understood that nervous twitching near the temples to mean mental perturbation. Before Clinton left he said awkwardly:

"That stock, you know, that I bought with the money you were kind enough to intrust to me, well, they—it—here——"

"You are giving it back to me?" queried Gasparina, holding out timidly her hand across the tea-table, and trying with kind tact to aid him.

"Not that exactly. This is the profit, you see, and, with your permission, I will still retain the capital for further investment." He wished it were not so hard to discuss and handle money in her presence.

"But you are too good to me—you will spoil me," she said, looking gratefully into his eyes, which smiled in response. She could not smile, for his manner and his kindness embarrassed her. Her eyelids drooped, and she sighed with a little catch in her breath.

Clinton left abruptly.

Not until the heat of summer had driven everyone out of town and had laid an unkindly touch upon the leafage of the Park, could Blanquita persuade her sister to leave the city. They closed the little apartment and went to a hotel on the Jersey shore, one of those big caravansaries where one is much less molested than in smaller houses. Gasparina liked to be alone or with Blanquita, for Northern ways did not open her heart to Northern people, and one's thoughts are not bad company on the beach, with the noise and motion of the waves to stimulate them. Her slight figure, dressed simply in the softest of thin black materials, made a graceful silhouette against the sea and sky as she walked slowly along the shingle. She had always about her a languor that was not indolence, as repose is not weakness.

The recording angels who sit on summer-hotel piazzas, disguised as women quite past youth, wondered much about her, and were quite uncertain about the propriety of two young women being there unchaperoned, until they learned that Gasparina was herself a matron. She was given the title of Madame, that being an easy compromise between our Northern abbreviation and the picturesque Signora of South America. In the evening, when the orchestra were playing in their mushroom-like pavilion on the lawn, she always sat out on the balcony quite alone. Her delicate face was made more pale by its coif of loose black hair, and by her mourning garments, which she wore with an indescribable plant-like droop. Someone passing spoke to her, and the downcast lids were raised briefly, showing impenetrable eyes of soft black. It was as though they too had put on sable for her sorrow. Out there in the summer twilight she was like some strange Southern night-blossom —a cereus.

Sitting thus one evening, she glanced indifferently at an approaching shadow, and then saw Clinton standing before her. She quickly rose trembling and put out both hands to him, while happiness shone from her

eyes, and played about her smiling mouth. She was surprised into revealing that other self usually suppressed by conventionalities. Every glance showed flashes of sympathetic understanding, every motion betrayed an exquisite excitement. Clinton was bewildered, intoxicated with this new mood of hers. Her soft, quiet manner came back presently, but Clinton had seen enough to make him smile dreamily in remembrance, at odd moments in business hours, and to take him down to the beach Saturdays, when the Exchange closed early.

One Saturday he did not come. Gasparina watched for him until the train from the last boat was in, and then, with a long sigh, went hopelessly in to dinner with Blanquita. Later in the evening she went drearily out on to the balcony, but the electric light glared rudely upon her and showed too plainly the agitation which her mobile features involuntarily expressed; so she stepped lightly off the piazza and followed a path to the beach. The tide was half in, and a dim twilight showed each breaker as it curled and whitened. On the hard shingle she paced excitedly in increasing misery. Apprehension seized her, and hideous fancies tortured her. He was in danger, she insisted, and to be reasonable was impossible. The wind blew dark and cold and finally boisterously, with dashes of spray and rain which drove her homeward, chilled, wet and wretched.

The next day and the next she lay in bed, too weak with nervous exhaustion and apprehension to dress and go down among the people below. On Tuesday a letter came from Clinton, only a line, but to Gasparina's observant eyes it showed that it had been written with a trembling hand. He was not well, he said, had been kept late at the office too, and had not been able to take his usual holiday at the beach. Gasparina's heart pounded hurriedly in her alarm.

"He is ill!" she exclaimed aloud. "It is as I thought; he conceals his condition from me. Here I am useless to him, but there——"

Impelled by this half-expressed thought, she quickly dressed, and, calling Blanquita, said, "I am going to

town by the next train. If I should not come back to-night, you must put yourself under the care of Mrs. Carrington, who has been so kind as to speak to us." Blanquita wondered and would have asked questions, but her sister's hurried, tense manner forbade all but acquiescence.

At Clinton's hotel in New York a card went up to No. 265, but the sender went so closely after it that Gasparina's face met Clinton's eye before he quite understood why this bit of black-edged card-board was being given him. She was standing at the door, a dark, drooping figure, and, after the first swift glance, with downcast eyes. At his low, joyful exclamation, she impulsively stepped to his bedside, and her embarrassment fled. Looking eagerly into his pale face, brightening with a slow smile in which was an utter absence of his usual irony, Gasparina knelt and said earnestly:

"You are ill. I knew from your letter you were quite ill, and would not tell me all; and it is as I thought, you are quite alone, and that is not right. You have no one to take care of you, so I have come to be your nurse. I can stay at my apartment when night comes, but all the days I can care for you, and you will soon get well. See, you are already better!—for you smile and you look less pale. I will make a good nurse if you will only let me." She spoke in round, soft tones, but so earnestly and rapidly, lest her offices be not accepted, that she was scarce aware that Clinton had taken her hand in both of his and was holding it with feeble, nervous clasp.

Before her womanly loveliness and self-forgetting he was speechless. It was impossible to tell her how preposterous was this thing which she was asking with absolute disregard of social laws, and in his weakness he longed for just such comfort as she was offering. He said nothing, and Gasparina's eloquence spent itself.

Then he made a brave effort, and threw off the terrible weakness that was robbing him of energy and action, which to him were life itself, and half-raising himself

before sinking back again upon the pillows, he said with a strong effort:

"I will tell you what I will do. I am not really ill, you see, only a little tired, lazy I should call it; and as it really is a bit lonely here, as you suggest, with only the hall-boys as occasional visitors, I will go down to the Beach to-morrow or next day and rest there. Then if you want to make me feel like an interesting invalid with novels and shawls and anti-pyrine and—and friendliness, it will be thankfully received. But really, dear," it dropped off his tongue too naturally to sound excrescent, "you see I am so well now that I need no nurse; and as you are going now, would you mind ringing that bell for me on your way out?"

Thus dismissed, Gasparina, with a long, reluctant look, went slowly away. She left the hotel and proceeded down-town to the pier. The last boat had gone. There was still the train from Jersey City, so, frightened at being alone so late, and fatigued with effort and emotion, she made her way to the station. In the train she had time for thought, and to realize that she had been repulsed and disappointed, and for awhile was stupefied with warring emotions. He had thought her forward, too ready to come to him. Mortification mixed itself with her ingenious reasoning. But he had seemed glad to see her, and had held her hand and looked at her as never before. The remembrance of that was sweet consolation.

When the door closed after Gasparina, Clinton, exhausted by emotion and exertion, turned his face toward the window which looked out over the city roofs, bathed in a red haze which blended in an impressive harmony the chimney-erupted plains with the Jewish domes and Gentile spires. Shadows crept about the room, and the grayness of death replaced the severed glow that had preceded it. One thing alone seemed to shine in the active dark that was silently displacing the day. It was a bunch of white violets that Gasparina had left. Clinton's mood was altering, and the flowers did not please him now. He wished she had not left them, and

the father to that wish was still another, that she had not come at all. He was sure he should have liked it better if she had not unbent for him. He dearly loved to think of her as so immeasurably above him that she would not be actuated by the same impulses nor desires that governed him. Not that her exaltation should chill her kindliness, but should exempt her from humility. As he thought it over alone in the twilight, he felt almost angered at her for her unconscious fault of stepping to earth, and began childishly to harden his heart against her. His disordered fancy, once let loose, was like the genie of the bottle; it became too large to be forced back, and ultimately became master. He had told Gasparina that he would join her at the Beach, and now that he wished to do nothing of the kind, he would write and explain, making business the gauzy excuse for breaking his word. He persuaded himself that it was but simple justice to Gasparina to withdraw from intimate association with her the very instant that he felt this singular change creeping over him. He had never been a dissembler, and could not commence now. Being a man with whom thought and action were almost simultaneous, he could not wait until to-morrow to write, but must do it now. He forgot that on the restful banks of dreamland views alter and desires change, and that it were far better not to color a letter with a transient mood, lest that humor be replaced by a better before the letter has reached its destination. He only knew that he was filled with a vague sort of wretchedness whose only relief was action.

"Did you ring, sir?" asked the bell-boy, insinuatingly thrusting only his features beyond the door-line.

He was too old to be called a bell-boy, Clinton always thought, bell-man would be better, only that the word carries the imagination far away to steeple chimes. He was fat and smooth-faced, and wore a look of heavy care and melancholy which was in strong contrast to his flat, childish voice.

"Light the gas for me, Charlie, and give me pen and ink, and some sort of a lap-board. In the desk—right

before your eyes—you will find some note-paper. There, that is right." With his habitual air of oppressed but hopeless patience Charlie ministered. "Now, Charlie, come back in an hour and post this letter."

But when he returned, Mr. Clinton lay back on the pillows asleep, the letter on the table at his side. Charlie had served him so long that he knew his fondness for despatch, so took the letter and posted it with self-gratulation at his astuteness.

Clinton awoke next morning with nerves calmed, but with a sense of haunting unpleasantness. When he had shaken the dream-webs from his mind, he knew the cause,—it was his mood of yesterday which was quite gone now and happily had reached no further than the walls of his bed-room; for, although he had churlishly prepared a shaft for Gasparina, his timely slumber had prevented its being thrown. He looked about for the letter to destroy it, but it was gone. He rang for Charlie, who explained world-wearily.

Clinton was speechless, and set his teeth in grim despair. He seemed to have all at once a clairvoyant vision of an impulsive, sensitive, loyal woman stunned almost beyond feeling from excess of emotion, as a crushed nerve finds relief in transient numbness. He felt that her over-sensitiveness had not only absorbed but exaggerated his meaning, and that with ingenious self-torture she would read and re-read, extracting each time an increase of intent.

All that day Clinton chafed, too weak to leave his rooms, but on the morrow found action possible. He dressed and drove to the office. He arrived down-town late, an hour or two after his usual time for appearing. He was evidently not expected. Bradley was out for the moment. In the centre of the office stood a supplicating Jew vender, whose combination of plaster-casts and gaudy silk mufflers was spread conspicuously about. Petrie, in his security grown recklessly facetious, was chaffing both the Jew and the bookkeeper, when the door opened and he saw Clinton, pale, intense and evidently weak, for his thin hand was grasping his

stick with an eagerness suggesting reliance. Petrie colored, looked defiant, then ashamed, for the junior partner's face showed only amused tolerance and a smile parted his lips, even though the fine, uncontrollable muscles of his nostrils fluctuated perceptibly.

"Don't forget he has his bread to make, Mr. Petrie," was all he said as he glanced at the Jew and then stepped quickly to the ticker. He had read yesterday's quotations on his drive down-town, and with the scent of the war-horse had smelled the battle afar off. He read the tape with all of his old eagerness, and saw approaching one of those opportunities seizure of which had given him his standing in the street. If his strength would last he could make a grand stroke. He went toward the outer door, which was flung open from the outside by the postman.

Clinton extended his hand for a letter, tearing its envelope as he passed out. In the corridor and on the elevator he read the letter, which was from Blanquita, written with difficulty in English:

"DEAR MR. CLINTON:

"My sister she is very ill. I do not know what she has. Perhaps it is a fever but her heart is sick. She holds a letter always in her hand and calls always for Mr. Clinton. She does not hear me when I speak. Will you not come to help us?"

There was a single chair in the elevator; Clinton sank into it. He reached the ground floor still motionless.

"Going up, sir?" said the man, as a reminder to the lifeless figure. Pulling himself together he went out, and with unseeing eyes walked quickly through the crowded street to the Exchange. Some of the Grangers were being sold; Clinton bid and bought, but in the midst of the shouting mob on the floor he could think only of Gasparina, and determined to go immediately to her.

The journey to the Beach was filled with all the horrors of remorse, self-condemnation and suspense. When he arrived at the hotel and asked for Mme. dos Santos,

he was scarcely surprised at being immediately shown upstairs to her apartments, and it was only when the boy knocked softly on the door for him and said tentatively, "You're the doctor from New York, sir," that he realized anything unusual in his action. Seeing his advantage over conventionalities, he made no reply, but stepped in, closing the door after him. He looked through into another room, and saw Gasparina lying white and still in dainty length on the bed, the drapery of her couch bending in conforming curves over her girlish figure. The aureole of her wavy black hair contrasted sharply with the white of the pillow, and framed the exquisite pallor of her creamy face. The lines of trouble were smoothed from her fine sweet brow, and a strange dignity invested her prostrate figure. Could it be the dignity of death?

"Blanquita!" he cried in sudden agony, seeing the girl approach her sister with something in her hand. "Is she——? she is not——!" He could not say it, but with electric swiftness put out his hand and touched that of Gasparina, which lay like a broken lily over her breast. Utterly unnerved, he sank to the floor, and seizing the hand, bowed his face over it in a tumult of emotion. As he knelt there by her bedside thanking God that she lived, a strange odor as of ether reached him. Looking up, he saw Blanquita holding a saturated handkerchief close to Gasparina's face.

"What are you doing? What is that you are giving her?" He took from her the bottle, and read ether on the label. He looked at her in horror. "Do you know what you are doing? You are killing your sister," he exclaimed in desperation.

Quite imperturbable in her dense ignorance, Blanquita replied with dignity that a doctor in Paris had given it to her and that it was good to smell—not to taste, oh no, but to smell, and Gasparina had suffered so much that she must do something before the doctor could come,—and this calmed her, he could see himself how quiet she was.

Argument was hopeless, so Clinton slipped the bottle

into his pocket, threw away the saturated handkerchief as he would a viper, and began to rub the lifeless hands, imperatively demanding various restoratives. So he had come to save Gasparina's life! He did not doubt that Blanquita in her ignorance would have put out the feeble flame if left to herself. Before the doctor should arrive it was his privilege to call back the precious life in which all life for him was vested.

At last there was a faint sigh, then another, with a little catch in it and a flutter of black-fringed lids. Then there was a long lapse into silence again, waking from which she tried to speak. The ether had put to sleep not only her body, but her mental pain as well, and the waking of the latter was slow. As she revived, she was conscious only of a happy languor, free from any sort of distress. Then followed another hour of oblivion, and when she waked, her beloved was there by her side, begging her to forgive him, with eager self-denunciation putting in a plea for mercy. In the haze of languor that possessed her and softened every hurt, the emotion of the last day or two sank into inconsequence, and forgiveness was so easy as to seem unnecessary.

"Dearest, will you take me back? and may I stay?" he pleaded, reading encouragement in her smile.

Only the sensitive soul of a lover could have heard the reply, but the words reached Clinton's understanding, and his fine face brightened with a wondrous happiness and peace.

It is strange how the junior partner's reputation for "nervousness" has altered in the office. Mr. Petrie remarks that it was a lucky day for all of them when Madame dos Santos came there to make investments. In his heart Clinton knows that it was a lucky day for himself.

"Big Brose" and "Emmy" belong to the type of negro which was said to be more common "befo' de wah" than since; but it must be admitted that a race which could display such attributes under the restrictive influences of slavery should inspire the highest hope of its development under freer conditions. "Big Brose" and "Emmy" certainly lost nothing of character by their transition from bondage to freedom. Their heroic story was told by Augusta Larned, and first appeared in the New York *Independent*.

EMMY.

A STORY OF THE GREAT FLOOD.

"DUNNO, specs something is going to happen."

"Why, Brose?"

"Oh! de mockin'-bird sung so dismal-like in de swamp. Nebber knew it to fail when dat dar bird begun to predict bad t'ings."

Emmy looked at Brose as he stood leaning on his hoe-handle in the sweet-potato patch. She had no logic with which to combat his fears, but she felt in her heart that they were superstitious.

"Reckon it's spring fever," said Emmy, after a moment's reflection, as she shifted the heavy baby from one arm to the other and straightened back, to hold him the more easily. "Elum bark is good for dat."

Big Brose shook his head. He took his wife's suggestion with kindness; but he was not to be moved from his inward conviction that the mocking-bird's peculiar song meant something bodeful and unlucky. But he again put his hoe in motion, and Emmy went into the cabin. It stood on the bank of one of those sluggish yellow southwestern rivers, near a fine grove of red oaks, with long gray moss dangling from the branches and swaying in the wind. A few China trees overshadowed the roof, but the young leaves were only beginning to put forth, for it was yet early Spring. There were two black pigs in a pen near the cabin, and a large number of fowls pecked and scratched about the door.

The young crops of corn and potatoes growing close at hand looked forward for the season.

Big Brose and Emmy had both been born slaves on the same plantation. When "Mass' Linkum's" proclamation came, freeing the colored people, they were still young. In the intervening years they had grown up on the old place, had received a little schooling in one of the colored schools set up in the neighborhood by a Northern teacher, and had finally married and settled down on a small fragment of old Mass' Holcumb's plantation, which they were now working hard to pay for by labor in the cotton field and on their own strip of ground.

Big Brose was a stalwart Negro, very strong, a good worker, quiet, and fond of his home. Emmy had been reared at the plantation house, and for years had lived in the family of the old master as a hired servant. There were three young ladies in that family, and Emmy had been brought up in familiar, kindly intercourse with her young mistresses, especially with the eldest, Miss Angeline, who was nearly her own age. Miss Angie had now been married a year and a half to Captain Morford, and her baby was but two months younger than Emmy's; hence, there had sprung up even a closer sympathy between the young mothers.

Miss Angie still lived at home in the old house, which had once been a grand mansion, but was now somewhat dilapidated, showing the reduced fortunes of the family, which had not recovered since "wa' times." The house needed paint, especially the white pillars in front, boldly presented to the river, which now glaringly showed their wood and stucco. The floor of the porch was broken and sagging. The walks were untidy and lumbered with rubbish. The flower-garden was neglected, and the peach trees in the fruit-yard looked sickly with "yellows." This family of girls, without a brother, had but ill-known how to repair the waning prosperity of the old homestead. The father was now a broken-down, sickly old man, forced to leave his farm-work in the hands of hired negroes, who too often proved

shiftless and lazy. Of late years Big Brose had been the old man's right hand; and, had it not been for steady-going, honest Big Brose, the family might have starved.

One or two of the daughters had left home to teach school in a distant village. But now Miss Angie was married, and Captain Morford had brought his young energy to bear upon the almost hopeless problem of the old place. Brose was strongly in favor of the young Captain and his new methods, and between the colored man and Angie's husband had sprung up the kindly, confidential relation of trust and good will which existed between the two young women.

Now, as Emmy stood there in the sweet-potato patch, wondering what made Brose so "low-sperited" that afternoon, she looked away to where the path led, through a pretty piece of red oak timber, toward the great house, and suddenly caught sight of Miss Angie, in her light dress, coming down the path and drawing the baby-carriage. The little colored maid, whose duty it was to "tote" Miss Angie's first-born, was busy with some kitchen-work, and Miss Angie had brought her own baby to visit her friend Emmy. Mrs. Morford, with her golden-brown hair, hazel eyes, and lovely complexion, was certainly very pretty. She had been the toast of the country-side before Captain Morford carried off the prize. No one admired Miss Angie more devoutly than Emmy did; and yet she herself, an octoroon of a light tint, with a beautiful, willowy figure, and the whitest of ivory teeth, was very agreeable to look upon. People had wondered how she could love Big Brose, who was a full-blooded negro and not handsome.

Now the two young mothers came together almost as equals. Emmy brought out a chair, that her visitor might sit under the china trees in the open air, the day was so mild. The baby was asleep in its carriage, cuddled in downy coverings. It was not long before Miss Angie had taken Emmy's boy in her arms. The "pickaninny" was almost as fair as the mother, and his sloe-black eyes danced with glee. The hair curled all

over his head in pretty, close whirls, and, as Emmy said, "he was that springy it was hard to keep him still a minute."

"I believe Ben is heavier than my May," said Miss Angie, as she let her hat fall back from her face. "I don't like him to beat May, Emmy. You must not give him so much to eat."

"He grows like a weed, dat's a fack," said Emmy, smiling down in her friendly face. "Seems like we couldn't stop him no how; and Brose he is dat proud."

"I thought Captain Morford never would forgive May for being a girl; but now he is so fond of the little thing he don't want her out of his sight. He wrote to me Saturday, from St. Louis, where he has gone on business for the Granger estate, to send him a lock of her hair, and I put up two curls in a box and sent them by mail."

"Men is queer, and day is all alike in some t'ings," said Emmy; and then the two young women laughed.

"Anyt'ing new up to de big house?" Emmy inquired, after a moment's pause.

"No, nothing; only word came last night that the levee had broken in Mud Bayou, and there are three or four plantations under water. Do you remember, Emmy, when our river rose a great many years ago? I was a baby then, not older than May. I mean the great flood, when Father's place was under water?"

"Yes, I t'ink I do," said Emmy, reflectively. "Though I can't make dead shoer. Seems as though I minds how Mammy took me out in a boat, and de water was up to de tops ob de trees and houses."

"I wish my husband was at home," responded Miss Angie, looking up into the tree tops. The wind had changed, and was crooning, from the south, around the corner of the cabin. The sky had suddenly grown dark, and a vivid flash of lightning startled the two young women with a sense of danger.

"Nothing but a Spring shower," said Emmy, while she took her boy in her arms, and helped her friend to drag May's carriage into the cabin.

"It's been raining and raining for weeks up in Coon County," said Miss Angie, anxiously, "and now, if we get it here, the levees will be down."

"Brose is dat superstitious, he thought something was on us," said Emmy.

A terrible flash of lightning, that seemed to hiss and scathe as it passed close to their faces, drove the women into the darkest corner of the cabin. For half-an-hour the heavens seemed gashed by fiery swords, followed by earth-shaking peals of thunder, while the wind howled and the rain fell from the sky in solid masses. The two women kept close together, each clasping her terrified baby, and scarcely uttering a word.

"I most thought de end ob de world had come," whispered Emmy, as the storm began to abate its fury, and streaks of daylight laced the supernatural darkness that hung over them.

She had scarcely spoken when Brose was heard running down the garden path. He came bursting in, wet through, and with his black face almost pale from fright.

"De river is up and ragin'!" he cried, not at once seeing his wife's visitor, who was partly hidden from view. "It's a powerful poor show for de ole place. De levee has broke on Half-Mile Run."

Miss Angie ran forward with a cry, and seized the negro by the arm.

"My father, Brose! Where is he?"

"Didn't know as you was here, little Miss," said Brose. He had called her "little Miss" from his boyhood, when he had run on errands for her and had made her flower-garden. "Reckon ole Mass'r is all right. De break on de Half-Mile Run is spreadin', but de home field ain't covered yet."

"I can reach him then, Brose. Thank God for that! You must go with me. Emmy shall keep my baby here while I go to father. We will carry him back to Closson's. The water has never come as high as Closson's; and then we will think of what we can save. The old house won't stand another flood. We must think about the cattle and horses. If my husband were

at home, he would know what to do. Oh! Brose, you must stand by me now."

"Brose will," said Emmy, with reassuring quietness. "He was never known to fail. And don't you be scart, Miss Angie, de floods may go down in a few hours. I'll keep your baby safe and soun'. De cabin's high and dry anyhow; and don't you cry, Miss Angie."

She had quickly wrapped a warm shawl about the young mother's shoulders, who, after she had kissed her May, put her in her friend Emmy's arms, and then prepared to face the storm. She clung to the arm of Big Brose; for the wind was still a tornado, and an umbrella was useless against the tempest. There was water everywhere. The path was covered ankle-deep. Emmy watched them go away, sheltering herself as best she could behind the cabin-door, while Brose looked back at her in spite of the wind, and Angie cried out in a half-smothered voice: "Take good care of my baby. I will come back as soon as I see father safe."

Emmy shut and fastened the door, using main strength against the tempest. She was alone now with the two babies. Her Ben was still asleep on the bed, and Miss Angie's girl, with her soft, flaxen curls, and blue eyes wide open, was lying contentedly in the cradle, soothed, perhaps, by the sound of the rushing rain on the roof. Emmy could scarcely see the bayou through the streaming window panes, but every sound about her was ominous of coming danger. Her cabin was not exposed, like the plantation house, to immediate peril from the broken dike; but, if the swollen river burst its banks higher up, it would be swept away like a broken rush.

Alone there with the two children, and the sound of waters rushing and swirling around her, the tears came to Emmy's eyes. She was without a protector in this time of peril. Brose would come back to her and the "pickaninny" if his life were spared. But now the floodgates were open, and who could tell what might intervene to prevent his return. An awful sense of desolation crept into Emmy's soul; but she did not lie down supinely under her trouble. "De Lord help me

and protect these little innercents," she thought, as she looked about to see what could be done.

The chickens were cowering, wet and miserable, under the angle of a little shed, where Emmy kept her light wood. The two pigs in their pen were calling out for food. Emmy tried to peer out through the thick murk of mist and rain toward the bayou. She could catch glimpses of the yellow current, broken and roaring, as if lashed by demons. An old scow was tied up under a red oak tree on the bank. It was the scow Brose used when he took a day for fishing and duck-shooting. Emmy had sometimes gone out with him on the river, and had even taken the baby on exceptionally fine days. Now she stood and looked at the old scow through the tempest, which had begun to abate. If the water rose in the night and the scow were lost, there would be no means of escape. She knew Brose would come back. He was as sure as the sun; but in Captain Morford's absence he might have to work all night on the levee, directing the men.

These thoughts teased poor Emmy as she fed both the babies their bread and milk and put them down with playthings. Fortunately they were both as good as gold. Little May looked up and smiled at her, showing one pearly tooth. Now it occurred to Emmy to secure the scow. It was heavy, and she was not a very strong woman, but a vague sense of danger in her heart seemed to nerve her for the task. She tied a hood over her head, and, fastening the cabin door behind her, ran down the path to the bayou, with the wind trying to spin her about like a top. Thank God the bayou was yet in its banks, although it roared on its way, and the turbid, muddy current was carrying down trunks of trees and portions of the caving soil.

She seized the scow by its chain, and dragged mightily a yard or two up the bank. Then she stopped, panting and holding her side; then dragged again, tugging hard at the rusty chain until it cut into her slender hands and made them bleed. It was a good half-hour before the scow was brought near to the cabin door,

high and dry, beyond the possibility of loss. The storm was over. A dull, angry red showed through the tree branches in the dusk of evening. Emmy's hands were cut and torn; but the excitement of getting the scow up the bank had saved her from feeling pain. She was very wet, too, and there was only a spark of fire on the hearth when she returned to the cabin. She raked it up, and put on an armful of light wood, and soon the firelight filled the room, to the delight of the two babies.

Emmy opened a little box, a present from Miss Angie, where she kept her money, and, taking a five dollar bill, pinned it securely to her inside garments. Then she made a bundle of such things as the children might need, and, having packed a basket with bread, cold meat, and a bottle of milk, placed it in the locker of the old scow. There was nothing else she could think of to do, and she sat in the twilight, as the thunder rolled away in the distance and the heavens came out clearer, watching for Big Brose. How he would laugh at her preparations for a voyage on dry land! Emmy kept her eye on the bayou. It was very turbid, roaring and dashing great waves with a bodeful sound. But she had often seen it raging thus on Spring days, when even Brose could hear nothing to dread in the sound of the mocking-bird.

Emmy had put the babies down, side by side, in the great cradle which Brose had made for her in spare hours. They were a pretty picture, she thought, under the canopy of blue muslin. Then she sat, in the twilight, crouched down and straining her ears for some distant sound. As the daylight faded away, and it was time to light the evening lamp, Emmy heard a bodeful noise—a dull, smothered roar, like the uprooting of great forest trees. She ran to the cabin door, and through the red oak grove, as far as she could see, there came a moving wall of dark water, uplifting itself in white, snaky crests that hissed and writhed all along the soled embankment. It ground the earth as if it meant to level hills, bearing down every obstacle in its way. It was coming straight down upon her, like a visible doom. Poor Em-

my! She knew what it meant. The upper levee had given way, and the flood was coming through the woods to join the back water of the bayou. In a moment it would be whirling all around her.

Ashen pale to the very lips, Emmy uttered a shriek there in the terrible loneliness, and, rushing to the cradle, she seized the children in her arms, and, with such wraps and clothing as she could hastily snatch, ran to the old scow, her ark of safety. The children had cried out wildly till fright hushed them as they found themselves placed in the bottom of the scow. Emmy had only time to seize the long pole with which Brose guided the craft, when the waters were upon her. Millions of snaky, milk-white streams crept through the garden patch before the tidal wave broke against the cabin and lifted the scow high up on its torrent. The chickens had flown to the top of the shed. They would soon be in the trees, and not safe there. The two pigs were rushing about, with piteous squeals, as they saw the water invading their pen. Emmy looked at the cabin, her dear little home for three years past, with the tears blinding her eyes. It was a mute farewell. The chimney stack must fall, and the wall Brose had laid up, with such pride for his young wife.

And where was Brose, the great, strong man, the black son of Anak, in this hour of supreme danger? Emmy was sobbing convulsively, as she gazed, with terrified eyes, upon the invading waters as they swept away her secure, happy little world. But there was no time for grief. Alone on the waves, with those two infants in the old scow, her utmost power was needed to save it from swamping as it drifted in the current. With her long boat pole, she strove to keep it off its snags, and her utmost vigilance was in demand.

A fierce current was setting into the bayou, and a fiercer one was carrying the drift of the bayou out into the current of the great river. She brushed close to the large red oak on the bank. A drooping limb swept close to her head. Emmy caught and held it until she had knitted about it her red neck-handkerchief. In

such a way she hoped it would remain, and give Brose the message she could not write.

A great surge swept downward and outward. Instantly the boat seemed lifted high upon the waves. It was moving in company with uprooted trees, the wreckage of the flood, that caught in eddies whirled with dangerous nearness, or compacted itself into floating islands, from which Emmy had much to do to steer free. It was very dark now, save for the glimmering of the stars, where the heavy storm-clouds had broken in the west. Emmy felt herself borne on powerfully, without effort or direction. Her scow, with the two helpless babies, was like a chip or a straw whirled on the torrent. Little Ben had begun to cry lustily with hunger. Emmy hoped the sound would reach some human ear on that wide waste of waters. She shouted loudly, in the hope of hailing some passing boat; but the wind brought the sound back upon her. Miss Angie's baby-girl rested, quite still, in the bottom of the scow, on an old quilt, while she applied herself contentedly to a bit of bread. The darling's quietude seemed phenomenal in contrast to Ben, who roared himself to sleep. Long strings of wild duck went streaming off westward. The distinctive shores of the bayou and the river were now obliterated, and there was a wide midland sea extending to the distant hills. Emmy was too busy to think. The stream was bringing down more and more dangerous drift, the carcasses of dead animals, barns, and portions of houses. Her boat pole was in constant use; but her heart was oppressed with dread of the fate which had overtaken the old house and Brose and Miss Angie. It was terrible to be so near, and yet to know nothing. As she swept past the place upon the river bank where she thought the old house should stand, she peered into the darkness, to catch a glimpse of its white pillared front. But all was gone. Nothing but the yellow, turbid flood could be seen. She seemed to make out dimly the great avenue of live oaks that led up to the mansion; and yet she was not sure.

Emmy had calculated that there must be boats upon

the river from the submerged plantations; and now in midstream she peered into the darkness, and strained her ears for the sound of human voices and the dip of oars. Sometimes she sent a cry over the waters, a long, distressful sound, like an animal in pain. But no answering sound came back, save the swish and swash of the waves, the grinding of snags, and those strange, dull explosions which reverberated along the distant shores when the banks caved suddenly. Emmy contrived to make a little shelter for the sleeping babies with an old shawl, which she fastened from side to side with cord Brose had left in the boat locker. The wind was growing stronger as the night advanced. Long before dawn she was in a new country, miles away from the little cabin on the bank of the bayou.

As the dawn came, rosy and fair, the children set up a simultaneous cry of hunger. Fortunately the can of milk was still sweet. She fed them and cared for them as best she could, and the strangeness of the situation kept them amused and quiet for a long time. Emmy strained her eyes to descry far distant hills; but it was all a flat waste of turbid water, desolate, and lonely beyond anything she had ever seen. She and the two babies seemed the only creatures alive in that ruined world. She could make out the tops of a few trees, like tufts of bushes, growing in the water, and here and there the roof and chimney stacks of a plantation house.

All the feeders of the great river were flooded, and bringing down the ruins of farms and towns. Just as the sun rose in a clear sky, she saw a house tipped over, and half submerged. A starved cat, crouched on the roof, mewed piteously as the scow passed by. Emmy strove to throw the poor creature a meat-bone; but it fell into the water and was lost. She hated to part with the first living thing she had met in her strange journey. It was still early in the day when, far-off, she caught sight of two black specks, that seemed in motion. They were boats and must see her. She tied a white garment to the end of the boat pole and let it

flutter in the wind as a signal of distress. Soon the black specks disappeared, and Emmy felt more desolate than ever. She could not spare the boat pole very long for the purpose of signaling, for the snags were growing dangerously frequent, and the current ever swifter. She caught the branch of a tree, and set it up as best she could, tying her signal to the topmost limb.

But it was past noon before help came. The country seemed to sink lower and lower with great fields of submerged sugar cane. Emmy had come into a strange world, so far from home her heart was ready to break. Toward noon, while she held both the children in her lap with one arm and steered with the other, there came a low, even thud upon the surface of the water, the swish of a steamer's paddle-wheel. Emmy knew the joyful sound. It was a steamer coming down from the North; probably a relief boat, bringing aid to the sufferers on the river. Emmy's little craft seemed to lie directly in the steamer's path. She waved her shawl wildly as the smoke-stack appeared, and then the boat hove to. God had heard her cry. In a few minutes the "Mountain Queen" was putting off a boat for her relief, and in less than half-an-hour Emmy and the two babies had been consigned to the care of good Captain Nash. The deck of the steamer was crowded with fugitives and sufferers from all parts of the river, many of whom had lost their earthly all; but when Emmy told her simple story, there were some who could forget their own losses in admiration for what she had done.

But poor Emmy's heart was sore with anxiety and dread for the home folks. With trembling lips and tearful eyes, she asked news of the Holcomb plantation and the people on Big Bayou.

"We passed there in the night," said the kind Captain, who had been distributing rations to the up-river towns, and was now bound for New Orleans. "The house is gone clean off its pins, and we could hear nothing from the folks. We let out all the steam in the boat's whistle, hoping they would make some sign

of life. We stayed nearly an hour, waiting to communicate, and then came away."

Poor Emmy broke down, and sobbed bitterly.

The Captain laid his hand kindly on the woman's shoulder.

"Don't get down-hearted, my girl. I shall find a way to send news of you up there to the folks on the Big Bayou. We are going to Orleans now, to take in new supplies; but our sister boat, the 'Rescue,' is to start to-day up stream from Magnolia, and, if you can write a letter to your husband and the folks at the plantation, it will go there to-morrow."

"Could the 'Rescue' take me and the children home?" said Emmy, looking wistfully at the Captain.

He shook his head, and was silent for a moment. It seemed unfeeling to tell the poor girl there was no home remaining for her. "Better not go back until you hear how things are up there. Stay here on the boat with me until we make our return trip inside of a week. Then I will try and land you at the old place; for the river may go down."

Emmy was obliged to content herself with this meager hope, but the suspense was dreadful to bear. The babies had already become the pride of the "Mountain Queen." They were handed around even among the boat hands, and received the kindest care and much petting and spoiling. Somebody named them the Water Babies; and before the "Mountain Queen" reached New Orleans a little purse had been made up among the men for the children's benefit. Emmy was ill at ease, and looked thin and worn. If she could know what had become of the folks at home, she thought, she could eat and sleep again; but uncertainty was wearing her to the bone. Those words of Brose about the sad song of the mocking-bird lived in her thoughts, with the dread that the worst was yet to be known. The sudden and awful sweeping away of the plantation house, the probable death of old Mass'r Holcomb, the despair of poor Miss Angie at the loss of her child, haunted her by day and night. If Big Brose was alive, she often said to

herself, he would hunt the world over until he found his wife and his pickaninny.

The telegraph wires were all down, and the "Mountain Queen" was longer in reaching New Orleans than had been expected. There were so many refugees to be taken in, so many miserable, starving, homeless, houseless people to succor, so many drowned villages and farms to visit and relieve, delay was inevitable. Emmy's letter had been sent by the "Rescue." The good captain tried to cheer her sad heart with the hope that news would reach them almost as soon as they arrived. But it did not come. It took three days to reload at the New Orleans levee, and the people the "Mountain Queen" brought down mainly scattered off to seek friends in the great, strange city. But Emmy had no friend, and she staid by the boat.

The weather was intensely hot, and the long streets looked baked and white with quivering heat. Emmy ran but once up into the town, to buy some needful things for the children, and then she hurried back, afraid of losing her way. She was waiting and watching for a letter. Three boats had come down the river with more homeless and destitute people. They brought friends to friends and parents to children; but they brought nothing to poor Emmy. The certainty of disaster weighed her down; but still her one thought was to get back to the old place where the little cabin had stood under the china trees, and where she had spent such happy days. She dreamed of finding Miss Angie and of delivering her baby safe and sound into her arms. Emmy asked for work to do, and the Captain let her assist the washerwoman on the boat in such hours as she could spare from the children. It helped to quiet the anxiety that was wearing her away.

On the fourth day steam was got up, and they left the Crescent City, making their way slowly through the muddy stream. Emmy could see that the water had fallen, and was quietly going down, hour by hour. Drowned plantations were emerging, little towns and settlements were coming into view. The cane-brakes

and negro huts were beginning to appear again. Boats were briskly flying about. Some sort of communication had been set up with the outer world. Emmy scanned every craft that came near with anxious eyes. She hardly knew what she was hoping for, and yet a flutter of expectation filled her breast.

It was the afternoon of that day, when she had dressed the babies in clean clothes, and had brought them on deck. They were sitting together in a large chair, and were smiling and prattling, in their infantile way, to the people.

"Hullo! There comes the 'Rescue' down stream!" said Captain Nash, pointing to a long wreath of smoke over the water. Emmy had heard the words. Her heart seemed to stand still. That boat, she felt, was freighted with life or death for her. The boat came nearer. It veered toward its companion steamer in the work of mercy to the destitute and suffering. The upper deck was crowded with passengers. It seemed purposely coming alongside its consort. Emmy, with a baby on each arm, and trembling with suppressed excitement, went to the side of the boat. In an instant the "Rescue" had come close in, and she could see on her deck a group of eager, agitated people, who had crowded to the side. Yes; there was Miss Angie's face, tear-stained with joy. There was Captain Morford, and, just behind them, Big Brose, towering a foot or two above everybody. The shriek Miss Angie gave, when she saw her baby stretching its arms toward her, rang over the water, and was answered by cheer upon cheer from the people on the "Mountain Queen." The boats were stopped, and good Captain Nash took the refugees from Big Bayou on board.

"What 'bout ole Mass'r?" were the first words Emmy spoke.

"Safe, Emmy. Big Brose carried him out of the house in his chair, just as the foundations gave way. He helped us all to Closson's, where we are living now. O, Emmy! Big Brose is a hero; and you are grand and good enough to be his wife."

The hero of the following anonymous story happened to be hunting tigers just as another fellow was hunting a man in the same vicinity. The natural results of such propinquity followed, and if a singularly clear-headed man had not found and sorted out the bullets which were fired, mortal trouble would have resulted.

BULLET-MARKS.

A WIMBLETON STORY.

We were sitting round our tent one evening last year, at Wimbleton,—the "we" being our major, the captain and sub of our company, his covering sergeant, corporal Williams, and a certain sapper, to wit, myself. We were drinking pale ale and smoking, as was every one else in the hundred tents around us.

"Here's my last bull's-eye," and the sergeant produced from his cap-pouch a flattened bullet, turned inside out as neatly as possible.

"What's the cause of all that, I wonder," said the corporal.

"You see," said the captain,—being an engineer he was bound to know,—"when the point of the bullet strikes the target, part of the lead is melted by the development of heat caused by the sudden arrest of the bullet's motion, and goes off in the splash, the rest of the bullet is softened by the heat; and inasmuch as the parts must stop in their order of succession, the edge of the cup of the bullet is driven in level with the base of the cup. Is that so, Major?"

"Yes, quite right; but, if you like, I can spin you a yarn about these said bullets, that may just last out these weeds."

"Well, let's have it."

I had a sort of second-cousin, Gerald Ashton, who had been brought up with myself and my sister, my father being his guardian. We had all been like

brothers and sister, when one day he woke up to find he could not live without a nearer relationship to her. He spoke to the old gentleman, and there was a little family fracas.

He had only a hundred a year, and my father did not think that was enough, though Gerald did; there was no objection at all in other respects,—"Let him earn some more and they would see,—wait a little,"—you know the kind of thing an old gentleman would say. Well, it was of no use. He said he felt himself a burden; there was no scope for his energies, and he would go,—and go he did.

I urged upon him that he should get something to do. He had been well educated, and a clerkship, or something of that kind, could be got for him if he still resolved not to go on at the hospital.

No,—he would go. There was only one thing he did do well, that was shoot; and he would carry his abilities to a market where they would be appreciated. And so, at the mature age of twenty-two, he left us, his profession, his home, and his prospects. He disappeared, and six months after we heard he was with, say the 40th Dragoons, in India. We wrote, and offered to buy his discharge, but he would "have none of us." He liked it very well; was already corporal; expected the three stripes soon; and was "Gentleman Jack" with his comrades.

Some six months after this I was sent out to India with a company; and as my sister was getting thin, and showing other signs of the desirability of a sea-voyage, and of a warm climate, it was agreed I should take her over. We reached Calcutta, and in a few weeks settled down. There was war going on, and I was placed in charge of one of the chief depots for small-arms and ammunition, besides having my regular duties with the company. One day I was down at the store, when my sister arrived, pale and breathless.

"Look, Charles, poor Gerald's in dreadful trouble."

I put her into an office chair, and took the newspaper, and read,—

"Yesterday evening, as an officer of the 40th Dragoon Guards was returning to camp, he was shot at from behind a clump of bushes; the bullet struck him in the thigh and lodged in the saddle. Although wounded so severely, he had sufficient presence of mind to ride straight to the bushes, and there found one of his own men, a corporal of the troop, nicknamed "Gentleman Jack" by his comrades, whose rifle was still smoking from the discharge. Fortunately, at this moment the guard arrived, and the man was at once arrested. A court-martial will, of course, be held at once, and, although the man has previously borne a good character and is reported to be respectably connected, it is to be hoped he will receive the proper reward for so abominable a crime."

"Oh," I said, "this is all nonsense. Gerald's no murderer, or else he's very much changed. I'll see what they say at head-quarters."

"Do for God's sake, go. If anything happened to Gerald, I should never forgive myself, for if I had run away with him when papa was so cruel, he never would have enlisted at all."

"Don't talk nonsense, Meggie, but go home, and I'll come with the telegraph news."

I went to head-quarters; they gave me permission to use the telegraph for a question or two. The report was not encouraging.

It was our Gerald,—the officer had seen the flash and heard the report,—an extremely loud report, as if there had been two charges of powder in the carbine.

The bullet was found in the saddle, and one cartridge was missing from his twenty rounds. Court-martial had declared him guilty, and the general's confirmation of the sentence had just arrived. Fifty lashes in the camp square, and four years' imprisonment in the civil jail. Sentence to be carried out on the 12th. Everybody was sorry, but quite convinced he had tried to murder his superior officer. No one could understand with what motive.

I did not know what to think; there was more evi-

dence forthcoming in a day or two, when we had the papers.

His statement in defence was, that he had just been returning from guard, when he remembered that he had forgotten to bring in a book one of the officers had asked him to bring in from the town, some three miles distant. Without stopping to think he walked off at once; got the book, and was within half a mile of the camp, when he fancied he saw a tiger. He got behind the bushes to watch, and saw one making for the distant camp. Anxious to secure the prize, he incautiously broke open one of his packages, and loaded, to have a shot at it. He had covered the beast, and was firing at the tiger, when he heard another report simultaneously with that of his own carbine. He saw the tiger roll right over as if shot, and then bound away. In another instant the officer came round the tope bleeding, and ordered him into arrest. He was quite sure that he hit the tiger, and equally sure that another rifle was fired at the same moment that he pulled the trigger. Of course such a lame statement had no effect, and he was sentenced.

I could not help thinking that there was a flaw in the evidence. How was it if there was, as agreed, a loud report,—which meant a full charge of powder,—that the bullet stopped at the saddle instead of going through both saddle and horse. That was a great discrepancy, —a full charge would have made a loud report, and sent it right through anything at a distance of 200 yards. I felt there was something wrong, and made up my mind to go on the spot. I had but six days to go in, but much might be done. Margaret insisted on going with me, in spite of all I could do to keep her away.

"Have I not done all you wished me to do since we have been out here? Do, for Heaven's sake, let me have my way in this."

So we went up the country in post haste. I was, of course, as one of the staff, admitted to see Gerald, whom I found terribly cut up.

"I don't mind the imprisonment; it's the disgrace!

The lashes! My God! I shall kill myself directly I get loose after it, I know I shall."

"No, no," said Meggie; "don't, for my sake. O Gerald! if you knew how I have suffered for weeks past, you would live for my sake. I do not care about the brand or the lashes. I know you are innocent, and that there has been some horrible blunder committed in this matter. O, Willie, dear, do think of something to save him."

"O, do, there's a good fellow! get me some stuff that will make an end of me."

"Don't talk like that, Gerald; there's some infernal mistake in it. Don't despair yet. Let's go over the ground again, step by step," and I made him tell me the whole story over again.

"It seems to me, Gerald, we want not a few things to show you are not guilty. We want the tiger you shot at, and that we sha'n't get; and we want the clew to the mystery of the other rifle."

"O, I've thought of it all till I'm sick. I don't care what happens now. I'll wait till the day before it's to come off, and then break my head against the walls."

"Do't be a fool, Gerald! I'm sure you are innocent. So is Margaret."

"Yes; so are a hundred others; but it's all no use. In three days I am disgraced for life, if I live."

"Well, I must leave you now, and see what I can do."

"Let me have five minutes with Meggie, will you?"

I left them alone for some ten minutes, and then told Meggie she must go home with me. I was beaten; I could not see how I could get any fresh evidence, and without that a reprieve—a postponement—was impossible. I went to the wounded officer, the captain of his own company, and got him to tell his own story; it was the same thing over again,—always the exceedingly loud report, and the fouled and still smoking carbine.

"I would," said the captain, "have given the price of my commission rather than have had it happen. He's as fine a fellow as ever sat a horse, brave, kind, and as thorough a gentleman as the colonel himself; I always

made him my orderly when I could, so as to have his company. I declare to you that I did my best at the court-martial for him, and got into disgrace with the general presiding for 'coloring my statements'—that was his expression—so as to favor the prisoner. I almost snivelled when I heard the sentence, as if he had been my own brother. The men are mad about it; there has not been a lash or public punishment of any kind in the regiment for the last twenty-five years."

I hardly knew how to pass the time; I tried to think, but my ideas only travelled in the same old grooves again. I invited the assistant-surgeon to come up to my quarters, and introduced him to my sister. He was a young fellow, and seemed quite flattered by my simple attention, for in the army they have not quite made up their minds whether a medical officer should be treated as a gentleman; but the strangest thing I ever saw in my life was my sister's conduct. Of course, speaking to you fellows, I sha'n't be misunderstood, and some of you have seen her. She laid herself out to please him to an extent I never should have thought my dear grave Meggie capable of; sang to him, played to him, and made eyes at him till I thought her brain was turned. She said she should so like to see his quarters, asked him to ask us to lunch, and shut me up like a rat-trap when I ventured to hint that it might not be convenient.

Well, he went away at last as mad as she. I spoke to her after he was gone, and she fell into my arms, sobbing as if her heart was breaking, and then, without a word of explanation, ran out of the room. Next day we went to his quarters, and nothing would satisfy her but that he should mix up some medicine for her out of the bottles of his little travelling case. There she was, handling, and sniffing, and tasting everything, like a child of ten rather than a girl of eighteen. She sent him about the room; made him bring books from the opposite side of it, so that she might read about the properties of the drugs; and, in short, behaved so like a lunatic that I thought the trouble about Gerald must

have affected her mind. I got her away at last, and intended to insist on her remaining in the house and putting some ice to her head. It was quite unnecessary; the minute we left the surgery she was calm and silent as a man.

Well, the days passed in some sort of dreary fashion till the evening of the 11th. I had been asked during the day to go down with the officers to see some rifle-practice, at some temporary marks, and I went down. It was rather late when I rode up to the firing-point and they were just leaving off; and one of them came up and said,—

"I say, captain, tell us the cause of these new bullets turning inside out?" and he handed me a bullet reversed; just such another as Williams has in his hand.

I took it, just to explain the matter to him, when a thought struck through my mind like a flash of lightning.

"Saved, by God!" I exclaimed. "Who's got that bullet out of the saddle?"

"What bullet?"

"Gerald's,—my cousin's."

"Oh! 'Gentleman Jack's' affair. The doctor's got it."

"Where is he?"

"Don't know,—quarters I think."

"No, he's come into town; I saw him on the road as we came by."

I sped on into the town, leaving them to think what they pleased; and spent more than two hours finding the doctor. At last I caught him. In another minute we were riding full gallop to his quarters. He had the bullet,—a little bruised and singularly flattened, and blunted at the point,—it must have been just spent when it struck. I then went to the sergeant who had charge of the nineteen rounds of ammunition that were found in Gerald's pouch. About midnight I contrived to find him, and after some little delay I got possession of them. I then returned to the doctor, and we compared the nineteen bullets with the one found in the saddle. I then ran to the telegraph clerk, roused him

out of bed, and told him to telegraph to the headquarters in Calcutta, to my lieutenant in charge of the magazines.

After an hour's waiting, ringing at the bell, an answer came that the night-watchman would fetch the lieutenant. I then sent message No. 1.

"Examine the books, and see the date on which the last ammunition was sent for the use of the 40th Dragoons; find the same parcel, and carefully remove one cartridge from each of twenty packets, selected at random; take out bullets, and remove plugs; send No. in base of cup of bullets."

The answer came back that he understood, and would rouse up the people to do it. After an hour-and-a-half, the answer came back,—

"All the bullets are numbered 5, with a dot on the right."

I then sent message No. 2,—

"Examine what cartridges bear the No. 2 with a dot on the left, and report to whom issued, and when,—report quickly,—a man's life depends on speed."

Again I waited another hour. No answer came. It was getting late, half-past two; at four the parade would take place. I urged more speed. The reply came:—"We have ten men at work breaking open barrels, and searching. No No. 2 yet found."

At last it came,—"One barrel No. 2 in store; the rest of the same shipment was damaged and useless, and sold in bulk to native dealers for value as old metal at one of the clearance sales some time ago."

I had learned all I could. I spurred back to camp with the bullets, from which I had never parted, in my pouch. I shall never forget the scene. In the middle of the camp the men were drawn up in three sides of a square; in the centre of the square were the triangles, with Gerald lashed to them. I saw them as I came down the hill take off his jacket and lash his wrists. I sped on. I could see the old colonel, with the paper in his hand, standing alone, and then I saw nothing more, for a dip in the road concealed them; as I rose again to

the crest at less than a quarter-of-a-mile, I saw a woman rush in from between the ranks towards the triangles, holding something in her hand. I darted on, and rushed into the square, but just in time to seize the farrier's arm as the lash was descending, and to see that the woman was my sister, and that she was being led away between two sergeants.

"Stop, colonel, for the love of God!" I cried, with my hand still grasping the farrier's arm; "I have evidence to prove the man not guilty."

I then showed the colonel the bullet that had come from the saddle and the others from the pouch, and pointed out to him that while one was marked No. 2, the others were all marked No. 5, with a dot. I assured him, on my honor as an officer and a gentleman, that it was almost impossible that a No. 2 bullet could by any chance get into a packet of No. 5 bullets. He was only too glad to hear me, and agreed to postpone the execution of the sentence till further orders from the general of his division.

I've heard some shouts, and I've seen some displays of enthusiasm in my time, but I never shall forget the shouts that rose the minute that the colonel had pronounced that the execution of the sentence on Corporal Ashton would be postponed until further orders.

The men had been standing at "Attention," many of them with the tears rolling down their cheeks, but when they heard "Postpone," they broke ranks, rushed up to the triangles, cut the lashings, broke the cat, screamed, shouted, danced like madmen.

"Three cheers for 'Gentleman Jack' and his wife! Again! again, boys!"

Officers and all joined in for a few minutes. There stood the old gray-headed colonel in the midst of a scene that out-bedlamed Bedlam.

As for me I was like a man in a dream; I felt a hundred hands grasping mine. I had my sister sobbing in my arms, and then I heard the colonel say to the bugler, "Sound the assembly." What a change! In less than a minute I stood by the fallen triangles in the centre of

three lines of living statues. Not a sound; not a movement.

"Major Jackson, reform your column and break off the men," said the colonel; and then walked away with my sister and myself.

"But what did your sister do there?"

Well, she had promised Gerald that he should not suffer the disgrace of the lash; and had, during the hour I thought she was fooling with the doctor, managed to get hold of his bottle of prussic acid, and had rushed out with half of it for him and half for herself; and her appearance had so throroughly surprised everyone that she had reached the triangles, and almost raised it to his lips, when the doctor recognizing his own blue bottle, struck her hand a violent blow and dashed it on to the ground, besides disabling her from getting her own share.

"And how did the affair end? Was the general of the division satisfied?"

I don't think he would have been with that evidence alone, and so we went about to hunt for more. I begged that, as we had found so much, Gerald might be permitted to accompany a party of search, under a guard, to find the missing tiger.

We went there, Meggie insisted on joining us. All the officers off duty went, and about half the men. Gerald then pointed out the spot where he had stood, and where he had shot the tiger; and from that point we started, crossing and re-crossing, till there could not have been anything as large as a half-crown that could be hidden. Meggie and I were riding in front of the line, when Meggie exclaimed,—

"What a horrible smell comes from that copse."

"I don't smell anything, Meg."

"You've lived here so long that you've no sense of smell left."

Of course, as Meggie was with us, Blinkers was there too. Blinkers advanced to the copse—paused—and rushed underneath the grass, barking as if infuriated.

"There's something in there, Willie."

Some of the others coming up, we pushed our way into the depths, guided by the frantic bark of Blinkers, and, after being much scratched and torn, found ourselves in the centre of a trampled circle of jungle grass, with the half-devoured remains of a large tiger.

The doctor was sent for, and the wound discovered: the beast had evidently been lamed, the bullet breaking the fore leg. It was also evident that, wounded as it was, it had lingered on till it was mere skin and bone, and had died only within the last few days. Assisted by some natives, the good-natured doctor commenced the horrible task of searching for the bullet, and, after half-an-hour's labor, the most disgusting he had ever undergone, it was found flattened against the large bone of the hind leg, and handed to me.

Never shall I forget the pleasure I felt when I saw on the rescued bullet the No. 5, with a dot as fresh and clear as if it had just come from the pressing machine. Great was the rejoicing that night in the camp of the 40th. Blue fires were burned, the band came and serenaded Meggie. The whole of the officers, including the old colonel, came as to a levee; but still I felt there was one thing more to be found out. How did the No. 2 bullet get into the saddle?

At length I inquired whether any of the officers missed any of their arms. Curiously enough, the only missing arm was a gun belonging to the wounded captain. I asked, did he remember the size. He did. It was just a shade smaller than the bore of the regimental carbines. You could get a government bullet down by a good deal of hammering.

I now propounded my theory, that the bullet No. 2 had been fired from the captain's missing rifle, for the point of the bullet was marked with rings, and considerably flattened. Now, there was nothing in the flesh and nothing in the saddle to produce these marks, and they must therefore have been made before firing. I then proposed that a full search should be made with dogs, for at least two miles round from where the shot was fired, to see if any traces could be found of either

the man or the gun. We made the most careful search; presently I came to a stone on the road itself, marked in a most peculiar manner.

"What's the cause of these marks?" said I to the farrier of the troop, who had volunteered to help, and who said he never felt more grateful to any one in all his life than he did to me for squeezing his wrist so hard that day.

"What's the cause? It's been used as a hammer for something—a nail in a shoe."

"Nail-heads are square."

"True for you—these are round."

"Do you think a ramrod would make these marks?"

"It just would. Somebody's been driving down a hard bullet with it."

"So I think. Now take this stone and throw it straight over that gap into the middle of the copse, and I'll mark where it seems to fall."

He threw it, and marking the spot, we found our way into the jungle; and there, within a few yards of the stone, under the long leaves, we found what we sought, —the remains of a native, stripped entirely of flesh and skin except on the hands and feet, and with a great gaping wound in the skull: and in the inside, which the ants had perfectly cleaned out, was a large piece of the breech of the burst gun that he had by his side.

The whole evidence was there; two empty cartridge cases; another No. 2 bullet; eight untouched cartridges. It was clear enough that the man, whoever he was, had taken the captain's gun and, putting in two charges of powder, rammed down the too-large bullet with the blows of the stone on the now bruised end of the ramrod; and the loud report that all the witnesses spoke of was as loud as the simultaneous report of the discharge of three charges of powder could make it, while the want of force in the bullet was accounted for by the bursting of the gun.

We took home the skull, and the burst rifle, and the cartridge-cases, together with some remnants of clothing; and we there found out the intended murderer to

have been one of the syces, or grooms, of the captain, whom he had horse-whipped a month before for ill-using a horse of which he had charge. Of course there was a new trial ordered; and, as the evidence was unquestionable, Gerald was discharged.

"Did he leave the regiment?"

Not a bit,—why should he? The men worshiped him, and the officer who was wounded was invalided; and he and his comrades managed matters among them so well that at the first parade of the regiment, in Calcutta, some six months afterwards, the old colonel presented to the men a new officer, Captain Ashton, adding, "If he makes half as good an officer as he did a soldier, there will not be a better in Her Majesty's service."

"And your sister Margaret?"

"O, I've just sent a little case, lined with velvet, and something inside engraved 'William Gerald Ashton, from his affectionate uncle.'"

"Now, lads, there's the 'out lights,' so we'll turn in quietly, and make bull's eyes at every shot to-morrow."

The unbending and persistent nature of the genuine Russian character, even in love, is illustrated in a masterly way in this extraordinary story by Ivan Tourgueneff.

THE BRIGADIER.

I.

Do you know, reader, those little manor-houses which abounded twenty-five or thirty years ago in the Ukraine of Great Russia? Few remain at this day, and perhaps —as they were built of wood—before ten years the last will have disappeared without leaving a trace.

Such a cottage I happened to visit thirty years ago; an old story, as you see. The little domain in which it was found belonged to one of my university comrades. He had inherited it quite recently from a bachelor uncle, and did not live on it himself. At a short distance, however, extended some large marshes, where during the summer season abounded great snipe. My comrade and I, passionate sportsmen, had appointed a meeting at this house for St. Peter's Day, the opening of the season. He had to come from Moscow, I from my village. My comrade was detained and did not come till several days later. I did not wish to begin shooting without him. I had been received by an old servant named Narkiz, who had been warned of my arrival. This old servant did not at all resemble Caleb or Savelitch (in the "Captain's Daughter," of Pushkin), but deserved more the nickname of *Marquis*, which my friend jocularly gave him. He had a bearing full of assurance, almost of dignity, and manners refined in their slowness. He looked with pity on us young fellows, and evinced little respect for the class of gentlemen; he spoke of his old master with a disdainful negligence, and as to his fellow-servants, he despised them profoundly "for their ignorance"—that was his expression. In fact, he could read and write, expressed him-

self with clearness and precision, drank no brandy, and rarely went to church, which caused him to be held a heretic. He was tall and spare, had a long and regular face, nose sharp, and eyebrows thick and always in motion. He wore a long and very neat overcoat, and high boots pointed in form of a heart.

II.

The day of my arrival, Narkiz, after having gravely served my breakfast, stopped in the doorway, considered me, moved his thick eyebrows, and said at last:

"Well, sir, what are you going to do now?"

"I don't know. If Nicholas Petrovitch had kept his promise, we should have gone out shooting."

"Hum! then you hoped, sir, that he would keep his promise faithfully?"

"Certainly; I counted on it."

"Hum!"

Narkiz regarded me anew fixedly, and shook his head with an air of compassion.

"If you feel inclined to amuse yourself by reading, we still have some of the old master's books. Only, so far as I can suppose, you will not read them."

"Why?"

"They are good for nothing books; they are not written for gentlemen of the present day."

"You have read them?"

"If I had not read them, I would not speak of them. A book of dreams, for instance—what sort of a book is that? There are others, truly; but you would not read them, either."

"Because?"

"They are books of divinity."

I remained silent, and Narkiz also. A sort of inward sneer moved his lips.

"What is above all disagreeable," resumed I, "is to remain in the house in such fine weather."

"Walk in the garden, go in the wood; we have a birch wood here. Or would you rather fish?"

"Have you any fish?"

"Yes, in the pool: perch, tench, gudgeon. True, the season is over; we are near July. Still one might try. Shall a line be prepared for you?"

"Do me the pleasure."

"I will send you a young boy, to thread the worms on the hook—or must I come with you myself?"

It was evident Narkiz doubted my ability to get through the affair alone.

"Yes, certainly, come, come," said I to him.

He gave a broad smile, in silence knit his brows, and left the room.

III.

Half an hour afterward we set out fishing. Narkiz had wrapped himself up in I know not what long-eared cap, which rendered him still more majestic. He marched in front with a solemn and measured tread; two lines swung in cadence from his shoulder. A little boy with naked feet, and with eyes fixed respectfully on the back of Narkiz, followed him, bearing a pot full of worms and a watering-can to hold the fish.

"Here, near the dyke," explained Narkiz to me, "a floating bank has been prepared for greater convenience. Eh! eh! our idlers are already there! Look! it has become a regular habit."

I raised my head, and on this same bank perceived two men, seated with their backs to us, fishing tranquilly.

"Who are they?" asked I.

"Neighbors," answered Narkiz impatiently. "They have nothing to eat at home, and so they honor us with their visit."

"They are permitted to fish here?"

"The old master permitted them; I don't know whether Nicholas Petrovitch. The taller of the two is a sub-deacon out of engagement, a worthless man; the stouter is a brigadier."

"How! a brigadier?" exclaimed I.

The garments of this brigadier were almost more pitiable than those of the sub-deacon.

"It is as I have the honor to tell you. He possessed a very good property; and now it is by favor he gets a corner in an *isba*, and he lives on what God sends him. But what are we to do? They have taken the best places. We must disturb these amiable visitors."

"No, Narkiz, leave them alone; do not disturb them. We will take another place. I wish to make the brigadier's acquaintance."

"As you please; but as to making acquaintance, you must not hope, sir, to get much pleasure from it. He has become very weak of comprehension, and as stupid in conversation as a little child. In fact, he is near his eightieth year."

"What's his name?"

"Vassili Fomitch; family name, Gousskof."

"And the sub-deacon?"

"The sub-deacon? He is called Cucumber—everybody calls him so, and as to his true name, God alone can know. A good-for-nothing, I tell you—a regular vagabond."

"They live together?"

"No, but the devil, as they say, has joined them by a cord."

IV.

We approached the bank. The brigadier raised his eyes to us for an instant, and immediately returned them to his float. Cucumber leaped from his place, pulled his line with one hand, and with the other drew off his greasy cap. After having passed his trembling fingers over his rough yellow hair, he made us a profound bow, giving out a little constrained laugh. The puffiness of his face betokened a regular drunkard, and his little eyes winked with a timid humility. He gave his neighbor a nudge, as if to remind him that it was time to be off. The brigadier began to fidget on his seat.

"Stay, I beg you," cried I, "you are not in our way. We will take this place. Stay."

Cucumber pulled up the flap of his worn overcoat, shrugged his shoulders, and shook his head. Our presence visibly troubled him. He would have preferred to go away. But the brigadier was reabsorbed in the contemplation of his float. The ex-sub-deacon coughed in his hand, drew his naked feet under him, covered his knees with his cap, and modestly replaced his line in the water.

"Do they rise?" gravely asked Narkiz.

"We have caught five little tench," answered Cucumber, in a hoarse and broken voice, "and his Grace has taken a large perch."

"Yes, a perch," repeated the brigadier shrilly.

I tried to open conversation with him; but Narkiz had not deceived me. The poor old man, in fact, had become very weak of comprehension. He inquired the name of my family, made me repeat it two or three times, seemed to reflect, and cried out suddenly:

"But we had a judge of that name. Cucumber, wasn't there such a judge, eh?"

"Yes, yes, my little father Vassili Fomitch; yes, your Grace," answered Cucumber, who seemed to treat him like a child—"yes, there was a judge; but give me your line—I believe the worm is eaten. It is eaten, in fact."

"Did you know the Lomoff family?" said the brigadier suddenly to me, making a great effort over himself.

"What family?" said I.

"How! what family! Fedor Ivanitch, Andre Ivanitch, Alexis Ivanitch the Jew, Theodulie Ivanovna the plunderess, and besides——"

The brigadier brusquely interrupted himself and lowered his eyes.

"They were his greatest intimates," said Narkiz in a low voice, leaning toward me. "It is thanks to them, thanks to that Alexis Ivanitch, whom he just spoke of as a Jew, and especially thanks to another sister, Agrafena Ivanovna, that he has lost all his fortune."

"What are you muttering there about Agrafena Ivanovna?" cried the brigadier suddenly. And his head raised itself and his white eyebrows contracted. "Take

care that—how dare you name her with that clownish impoliteness? Agrafena? Agrippina, you should say."

"See, see, little father," said Cucumber interposing.

"You do not know then what the poet Milton wrote in her honor?" continued the old man. And he began to declaim with emphasis, pronouncing the syllables 'an' and 'en' in a sub-nasal tone, in French manner, as did our ancient *petits-maitres.*

"'No; the flaming hymeneal torches'—that's not it, but this: 'No; it is not the vain idol of frailty, it is not amaranth nor porphyry which fill them with their charms'—them, do you hear? It is us two that it is all about. 'Their only care, without impediment, agreeable, delectable, full of languor, is rather to nourish in their blood a mutual flame.' And you dare to say, Agrafena?"

Narkiz smiled with an air half-indifferent, half-disdainful. But the brigadier had already again let his head fall upon his breast, and the line glided from his hand into the water.

V.

"I see it is not worth the trouble," said Cucumber suddenly. "The fish do not rise, and his Grace is just seized with an excess of melancholy. Let us go in—that will be better."

He drew from his pocket with precaution a little tin bottle stopped with a wooden peg, and poured on the back of his hand several pinches of bad tobacco mixed with ashes, which he stuffed in both nostrils at the same time.

"Oh! divine tobacco," cried he, coming to himself as from an ecstasy, "it gives you a thrill right to the teeth. Come, my little pigeon, Vassili Fomitch, deign to rise."

The brigadier rose from his seat.

"Do you live far from here?" I asked Cucumber.

"His Grace does not live far away, less than a verste."

"Will you permit me to see you home?" asked I of the brigadier, not wishing to separate from him so soon.

He regarded me fixedly, and smiled with that particular smile—grave, polished and slightly affected—which I have never seen but on the faces of very old men, and which always reminds me—I don't know why—of powder and a French coat with brass buttons; in a word, of the last century. Then he added, laying stress on each syllable, "he would be enchanted," and immediately fell again into his torpor. The gallant chevalier of the time of Catherine had for an instant reappeared.

Narkiz was astonished at my insistence; but I gave no heed to the disapproving shakes of his tall cap, and left the garden, following the brigadier, whom Cucumber supported by the arm. The old man walked fast enough, but with short steps, quick and stiff as if with stilts.

A hamlet appeared at last on the border of a ravine of no great depth. In a by-place was a cottage with a thatch roof, half uncovered, and a single chimney. In one of the two chambers of this wretched *isba* lived the brigadier. The lady of the hamlet was the wife of a councillor of state, Madame Lomoff, who resided constantly at St. Petersburg. It was she, I learned later, who had given this corner to the brigadier. She had also assigned for his nourishment a monthly allowance of a *pood* of flour, with a little salt and oil, and finally had allowed him as a servant a young idiot girl, taken from the serfs of the hamlet, who, though she hardly understood human language, yet sufficed in the judgment of Madame Lomoff to sweep the floor and cook a cabbage soup. On the threshold of this cottage the brigadier turned toward me, and making me enter before him with his smile of the time of the Empress Catherine, he asked me if I would deign to visit his apartment. We entered this apartment. Everything was so dirty, so destitute, so miserable, that the brigadier, having probably caught on my face the impression produced upon me by the sight of his abode, said to me suddenly in French, shrugging his shoulders: "Ce n'est pas—œil de perdrix." I could not make clear what he had wished to say by these words because, I having

addressed him in French, he no longer answered in that language. Two objects had struck me especially and from the first in the brigadier's chamber: the cross of an officer of St. George under glass in a black frame, which hung on the wall, and bore in old characters the following inscription: "Received by the colonel of the regiment of Tchernigof, Vassili Gouskof, for the taking of Praga by assault in 1794"; and also a portrait in oils, the bust of a young woman, very beautiful, with black eyes, brown complexion, long face, a high powdered head of hair, and patches at the temple and chin, dressed in a full robe of large design, bordered with blue fringe, such as was worn about 1780. In the strict, close curve of the nose, in the lips regular, but flat and thin, in the nearly straight line of the thick eyebrows, might be read a character, imperious, proud and passionate. No effort of the imagination was needed to represent to one's self how this face might suddenly become inflamed with passion and fury. Under the portrait, on a little pedestal, was a bunch of half-withered wild flowers in a common glass jug. The brigadier approached the pedestal, placed carefully with the other flowers the pinks he had gathered, and raising his hand in the direction of the portrait, he said in a respectful voice: "Agrippina Teleghine, née Lomoff!" The words of Narkiz came back to my mind, and it was with twofold attention that I examined the features, expressive but dry and hard, of the woman to whom the brigadier had sacrificed all his fortune.

"I see you assisted at the assault of Praga, Monsieur le Brigadier," I began, pointing out to him the cross of St. George. "You have merited to receive a distinction rare at all times, and still rarer then. Do you remember Suvarov?"

"Alexander Vassilitch?" answered the brigadier, after a moment of silence, during which he had appeared to muster his ideas; "yes, yes, I remember him—a little old man, very alert. You stand upright before him, you hardly breathe, and he, he skips here and there."

The brigadier burst out laughing.

"He entered Warsaw on a Cossack's jade, and himself all covered with diamonds; and he said to the Poles, 'I have got no watch; I have forgotten it at St. Petersburg'; and they say, 'Vivat! vivat! rogues! what! rogues!' Eh! Cucumber, lad," added he suddenly, changing and raising his voice (the merry sub-deacon had remained outside), "where are the rolls? and tell Grounka to bring some *kvass*."

"Here! your Grace, here!" said Cucumber, entering and handing to the brigadier the string of rolls.

And leaving the cottage, he approached a being in rags, with rough hair, who was probably the idiot girl Grounka. In fact, as soon as I could distinguish through the dusty glass, he began to ask her for drink by raising to his lips one of his hands, which he gave the form of a funnel, while with the other he made signs in the direction of the chamber we had entered.

VI.

I tried again to resume conversation with the brigadier, but he was visibly fatigued; he let himself fall groaning on a sort of truckle-bed, and after having said in a doleful voice: "Oh! my poor bones, my poor dear bones!" he began to unfasten his garters. I remember being much surprised at a man wearing garters, but I had forgotten that in his time it was the general custom. The brigadier began to gape lengthily and naively, without taking from me his eyes, which were become troubled; very little children do so. The poor old man seemed no longer to comprehend my questions. And he had taken Praga! It was he who, sword in hand, through the smoke and dust, a flag riddled with balls about his head, mutilated corpses under his feet, had led the soldiers of Suvarov!

It was he, he! Is it not strange? But it seemed to me that in the life of the brigadier there must have passed something stranger still.

Cucumber brought some bad white *kvass* in an iron pitcher. The brigadier drank with avidity. His hands

trembled; Cucumber supported the bottom of the pitcher. The old man carefully wiped his toothless mouth with the palm of his hand, and after having looked fixedly, he began to mumble with his lips. I understood that he wished to sleep, so made him a bow and left.

"His Grace will go to rest now," said Cucumber, who had come out after me. "He is very fatigued to-day; he has made his pilgrimage."

"What pilgrimage?"

"Oh! to the tomb of Agrafena Ivanovna, five verstes away in the parish burying ground. Vassili Fomitch goes there every week without fail."

"Has she been dead long?"

"It will soon be twenty years at least."

"Then she was his lady-love?"

"Oh, he lived always near her. I never knew the lady—but there was always love between them.—Sir," said he precipitately, seeing that I was going away, "won't you give me something more to drink your valuable health?"

I gave Cucumber another piece of twenty kopecks and returned to the house.

VII.

Upon my arrival I went to Narkiz for information. Naturally he assumed an air of difficulty and importance. He was surprised that such trifles could interest me. However, he finished by relating to me what he knew. This is what I learned:

"Vassili Fomitch Gousskof had made the acquaintance of Agrafena Ivanovna Teleghine at Moscow, shortly after the last disaster of Poland. Agrafena's husband served in the suite of the general who was governor of the province, and Gousskof had come to the town on leave. He was smitten with her immediately, but still did not quit the service. He was forty years of age, was unmarried and possessed a respectable fortune. Agrafena's husband died soon after and left his

widow childless and in debt. Gousskof heard of this situation, quitted the service immediately, retiring on a pension, and after having rediscovered the dearly-beloved widow, who was then twenty-five years old, he paid all her debts and redeemed her property. After that they never left each other, and Gousskof finished by even establishing himself at her house. Agrafena seemed also to love him; but she never consented to become his wife. The woman," said Narkiz, "was crazy, she was a regular lunatic. She maintained that her liberty was more dear to her than all the rest. But as to profiting by him, she did that extensively. All the money he could get, he brought to her like an ant. But the madness of Agrafena increased, and took greater proportions. She was of an ungovernable character, even so far that she could not stay her hands. One day she threw downstairs a little Cossack lackey who had brought her some sour milk, and this little lackey fell so unfortunately that he broke a leg and two ribs. Agrafena was frightened beyond measure; she soon had the wounded lad inclosed in an obscure closet, never left the house herself, and gave to no one the key of this closet until the groans that were heard there had completely ceased. The little Cossack was buried secretly."

"And if this," added Narkiz in a low tone, leaning toward my ear, "had taken place in the time of the Empress, nothing would have followed. Many such things have remained secret. But then," here Narkiz drew himself up and raised his voice, "the just Czar, Alexander the Blessed of Heaven, had just ascended the throne, and the affair was inquired into." Justice came to the place, the corpse was disinterred, traces of violence were discovered, and so forth. Well! would you believe it? Vassili Fomitch took all on himself. "It is I," he said, "who pushed him. I buried him." Naturally, the officers of justice—magistrates, notaries, policemen—all rushed on him like a pack of hounds, and shook him and knocked him about until his last penny was jerked out of his pocket. They released

him for some time, and then, pop! again the hand on the collar. Until the coming of the French into Russia in 1812, they did not cease to worry him. They would not have abandoned him until this moment like an old bone without marrow. But truly he had saved Agrafena Ivanovna; and afterward he continued to live with her until she died, and they say that she made such a cat's paw of this brigadier that she sent him on foot from Moscow to get the rents from her peasants. I swear to you before God it is true. For this same Agrafena he fought at long-sword with the English Lord Gousse-Gouse. Now the brigadier is no longer to be reckoned among men. He is an old horse without hoofs."

"And who is that Alexis Ivanitch, the Jew, who is also the cause of his ruin?"

"That was a brother of Agrafena's. A greedy soul, a usurer. He lent to his sister by the week, and the brigadier was surety. Oh! they skinned him well, like a lime-tree of its bark."

"And Theodulie the plunderess, who was she?"

"Another sister, and as cunning as the brother. A true lance always ready to pierce."

VIII.

"Behold then Werter has reappeared," said I to myself the next day, again taking the road to the brigadier's house. I was very young then, and precisely because of my extreme youth I made it a rule to disbelieve in the endurance of love. Still, very much impressed by all I had heard, I had the greatest desire to excite the old man to speak.

"I will bring up Suvarov again," thought I, "even now some spark of warlike fire must survive in him. Having once warmed him I will lead him to this—what do they call her?—Agrafena; odd name for a Charlotte!"

I found Werter Gousskof in his garden, and we walked along, talking rather indefinitely, toward the

door. Then, "Will you condescend to enter my apartment?" said he suddenly.

The poor old man had little but this phrase at his disposal. We went out of the kitchen-garden, but here I stopped involuntarily. An enormous bull stood between us and the cottage. With head lowered to the ground, he rolled his wild angry eyes, blew with force through his quivering nostrils, and plied brusquely one of his feet in front, casting into the air with his large cloven hoof handfuls of dust. Seeing us he recoiled a little, struck his flanks with his tail, obstinately shook his powerful shaggy neck, and gave out dull bellows, plaintive and threatening. I confess I was quite disconcerted. The brigadier advanced with the greatest nonchalance, and having said in a tone of authority, "What now, lout, ill-bred?" he struck it with his handkerchief between the horns. The bull retired still farther, then flung himself on one side and set out at a gallop, throwing his head from right to left.

"He did indeed take Praga," thought I, following the brigadier into his chamber.

He pulled his cap from his hair in perspiration gave a prolonged "ouf!" and dropped on the edge of a chair.

"I have come to-day, Vassili Fomitch," said I, beginning diplomatically, "first, for the pleasure of seeing you; and then, as you have served under the orders of the great Suvarov, and have taken part in events of the highest importance, I wished to know——"

The brigadier suddenly raised his eyes to me; a strange animation was pictured on his face. Already I expected, if not a story, at least some words of encouragement.

"I shall probably soon die, sir," said he in a low voice.

"Why such a supposition?"

"This is why, sir. I often see in dreams—perhaps you know. Agrafena Ivanovna the deceased, may the kingdom of heaven be hers! and I can never catch her. I run after her, and I can never catch her. But last night I saw her. She stood half turned toward me and smiled; I run immediately toward her and I catch

her. Then she turns right round to me and says to me: 'Ah! well! my little Vassili, then you have caught me at last.' "

"And what do you conclude from that, Vassili Fomitch?"

"From that I conclude, sir, that henceforth we shall be together. And glory be to God; may I venture to add, Glory to the Lord God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost" (here the brigadier began to chant) "today and always, forever and ever, amen!"

He began to make hasty signs of the cross. I could not draw from him another word and could only retire.

IX.

Several years later I again visited my friend's domain. The brigadier had long since ceased to exist; he died soon after I had known him. Cucumber was still flourishing. He conducted me to the tomb of Agrafena Ivanovna. An iron rail surrounded a large slab bearing an epitaph in trifling and pompous words; and there quite near as it were at the foot of the deceased was a little mound surmounted by a wooden cross already decaying and bearing the inscription, "the servant of God, Vassili Gousskof, brigadier and chevalier, rests beneath." His remains had at last found a final shelter near those of the being he had loved with a love beyond the love of mortals

When a man is bewitched with such beauty as that of "Marie," in the following story, written for ROMANCE by Madge Robertson, he is probably in no condition for reasoning; but if he could only keep cool, he might easily see that a young lady with so little decision of character would be pretty sure to lead him that dark and mysterious existence which is traditionally known as "a life of it." A few years of parsing Greek verbs, solving quadratic equations, and finding the right ascension and parallax of heavenly bodies, might have taken some of the nonsense out of her.

MADAME'S STORY.

A FRENCH-CANADIAN SKETCH.

"AND what became of Marie?" I asked. "She married, did she not? Or did she, now? I remember there was some excitement."

Madame sighed. "It is a very long story."

"Tell me, Madame," I begged. I give the story in her own words. I would that I could give her accent. Her English was almost perfect, though rather studied and occasionally confused as to tenses. But her singularly pure, clear voice and a faint foreign softening of each syllable made her charming to listen to.

"Well, as I think I told you long ago, Marie went away from me for one long year. When she was very little, I send her to a convent in Toronto, and I do not see her very often. She grow up so pretty, so spirituelle, the pale pink face and big eyes, black eyes, and long, long, lashes,—oh, she is beautiful! She sway like a rose in the morning, quite slender, and her small feet do not hurt the flowers. She is a flower herself, charming. She come home, and the lads in the village are distracted and I am too. It is very hard to watch Marie. She is so quick and so beautiful. She laugh in my face and say: 'Do not fear, my mother, I always stay with you. As for the men, I hate 'em all.' Then she dance away with the pale-pink ribbons flying from

the pink robe, and the lads follow her everywhere. She read love-stories, novel, she call them, and they put strange things in her head.

"She will not marry the lads in the village, she say, but some rich man will come from the city and take her away, and I, her mother, will have plenty of beautiful dresses and a maid to wait upon me. Then I scold her and say that I do not want those things, and she must marry a lad that I shall choose for her. Then she dance away, throwing the roses at me, and the ribbons fluttering everywhere, always ribbons and flowers with my Marie, and when she pass, the curling hair all tumbling around her, there is always a sweet perfume in the air. You remember her when she came from the convent?"

I nod. Who wouldn't remember that wild-rose of a girl, with the daintiest foot poet ever raved over, with a slender, lithe, ever-dancing, little figure, with her pretty gowns following every movement, with her glorious merry black eyes and the sea-shell pink on her cheeks. Remember Marie? I, who had followed her floating ribbons, had picked up the roses she let fall, had been as crazy about her as ever was village lad! Remember her? Yes, as one remembers a sprite, a fairy, a delicious dream. I sigh as one sighs for departing youth. Those mad happy days have nothing to do with me now. A moment ago—a day ago—I was bored, cynical, blasé, and now I would give my life to be dancing once more through the woods after Marie—after flowers and streamers and a floating gown catching on the wild-rose bushes—after Marie! If once more the woods could seem as green, the sky as blue, a girl as fair as Marie!

"So she will not marry, and by-and-by a girl from the convent write Marie to visit with her at her home, and I am tired and I let Marie go. She stay one whole year, and I weary for her and she come back. When I see her, the tears come in my eyes. She is pale and thin and so quiet. I feel dreadful. I ask her what the matter is, and she say 'Nothing at all.' But I, her

mother, know better, and I watch and wait. One day a letter come for her, and it is a man's handwriting on the envelope. Marie take it and say nothing at all. Then I feel bad, very bad, that my little girl have a lover and that I, her mother, know not of it. After a long time she tell me his name. It is Jean Lefroy, and she knew him at the house of her friend, and he tell her he love her, and I ask her if she love him—although I think it not right that I do not choose for her—and she say she do not know. But one day Mons—Mr. Lefroy come and say:

"'Why you not write me, Marie?' and she say to him that I am her mother, and he bow very low to me and say:

"'Madame, I love your daughter, and I write and ask her when I may come and tell her mother that I wish to marry her, and she do not answer me, at all, at all,' and he stride very fierce about the room, and Marie put her head on my shoulder and say that she love me, her mother, only. And he ask very quick:

"'Why you say you love me?' and Marie will not answer. She just put her hands to her ears and will not listen to him. I think she must be crazy, and I speak hard to her, but she just run out of the room. Then he go away and say he will come back again that evening. Then I speak to Marie, and she say there is another man too, and she do not know which she like better—that when one of them is there that she like the other one better—and it is making her pale and thin. Then I am very severe with her and tell her it is very wrong; that she cannot love either of them, or she would know. But she say she think she will marry one of them, and I tell her that Mr. Lefroy is coming to-night and she must say either yes or no to him, and she say that I will break her heart.

"Well, in the evening a strange gentleman come a very fair gentleman with pretty curly hair, and he ask to see my Marie. She look over the stair and she say to me:

"'It is the other one.'

"Then I am nearly crazy, but Marie say she will not go to see him till Mr. Lefroy come. 'Perhaps I can tell,' she say, 'when I see them both together.'

"When Mr. Lefroy come, we go down the stair and there they are, both together, and they look hard at each other. We talk a little while, and then I say: 'Gentlemen, what is it that you want?'

"And they both say quick, 'Marie!' And Marie she say:

"'But you cannot both have me. Is it not so?' And the one that came last say, very angry:

"'You must decide now, which one you will have!'

"Then Marie look at him and frown and say quick:

"'Very well then, I decide now that I will not have you.'

"Then Jean Lefroy he smile a little, and the other one walk out of the house quick, his face like a storm-cloud, and then Marie sit down and cry. She will not speak to Jean Lefroy, although he coax her very hard. She only say that she will stay with me, her mother. Then Jean he bow and say to me that he hope my health will keep good, and Marie stop crying and make him a grimace, and he go away, too. They both come back, often. But she cannot tell which she like best ever, and I am very weary. Almost I would be glad that she leave me and marry. So one day she tell me that next week she will marry, and there is no time to get her the clothes, and she will not tell me which one. I like them both very well, and I feel bad, but she only say, 'You will see.'

"On Thursday she would marry, only quiet-like—only those who marry her and I, her mother, there—and we go to the church together. When we get to the church, I look to see which gentleman, but I see no one. Marie is cool. She say: 'Let us wait. He may be late,' and she smile to herself. I think it is very strange; but at last I see Jean Lefroy come round the corner and Marie run to meet him. When he come near, I see that he look—oh, horrible! He have his arm tied up and his coat is torn and one of his eyes has

a black mark and he is lame. He wear no hat and the collar and tie are gone. Oh, it is dreadful. But I say nothing. I fear Marie change her mind again. But it is not so. They are married, and I make Jean tell me why he look so dreadful.

"'Well,' he say, 'Marie tell each of us, separately, that she will marry us to-day, and when I see him I smile, not knowing that he has her promise too, and when he see me he hold the head high, not knowing that I shall marry her. So all the week we nearly have our fight but I never touch him till—well, last night Marie write us both and say that she will marry the one that will get to the church first. We both get the note at the same time, and I see that he is getting ready early and I hurry, too. When he leave his house, I leave mine also and all the way we try to keep each other back. It is very hard work, and two hours after we leave the homes we have not get further than the first corner. Soon we start to run, but we cannot get past each other, and then he catch hold of me, and then we fight some more. But soon I tear his coat bad and he cannot wear it and then his vest, but Madame will pardon me that I cannot tell her all that happen. At all event, we have to go home to get the clothes and I get here first.'" Madame paused, and I knew her story was done.

"And were they happy together, Madame?" I asked. "It is hard to imagine Marie settling down quietly."

Madame sighed.

"It is a long story," she said.

Every boy who reads this story will wish that he could have been its hero; but such adventures are pleasanter in the retrospect than in the experience. Henry Russell Moser wrote it for the *Yankee Blade*.

CAGING A COUGAR.

It was a clear, pleasant day late in the fall. "Just right for a fine time in the woods," thought Will Hagar, as he vigorously handled the axe on the woodpile back of the comfortable farmhouse which was his home. It was the early morning, and the calm beauty of the scene promised an ideal day.

Will, however, lost little time in admiring the fresh loveliness of the morning, but greatly appreciated the outlook for a fine day, as his father had said he might spend it as he chose, after first supplying the kitchen with wood.

He was at no loss as to how to spend his time, his only care being to get through with his task as soon as possible. Then he would take his gun and wander through the deep woods that stretched for miles a short distance to the north of the house. A cold lunch in his pocket would remove any necessity for his returning home before evening.

The axe, plied by Will's strong arms, made rapid headway, and it was yet early when, having completed the job, he set out on his day's rambles.

He took his gun with him as a matter of course, though it was not his main object to hunt—that would come in as a side issue; for though he was a good shot, and fairly successful with both rod and gun, these sports were by no means paramount with him.

Will was essentially a student and naturalist, and to wander for days through the woods, examining and peering into everything new and strange, was his greatest delight. Therefore, his disappointment can easily be imagined when he was forced at length to acknowl-

edge to himself that it would be impossible for him to attend the winter school at the Corners, four miles from his home. All summer he had hoped to be able to save sufficient money for the necessary books and better clothing to enable him to attend, but thus far with only poor success. There were few opportunities to earn money in that neighborhood, and he felt that he could not ask any assistance of his father; for, owing to several unfortunate events following close after each other, Mr. Hagar was just then in straitened circumstances.

Will was thinking of this as he walked rapidly along. "I'll just have to miss the term, that's all. I can keep my eyes open and learn all I can by myself, and maybe I shall have an opportunity next winter," he mused, as he plunged into the stretch of woods nearest his home.

Once among the trees his naturalistic instinct swallowed up all other thoughts, and he strolled on, deeper and deeper into the woods, completely absorbed in his surroundings. About midday he reached a region where he had rarely been before, and after another half-hour's walk, which took him still deeper into the unbroken forest, he came across a deserted cabin. Out of curiosity he entered it. Though it had been erected some time before, when some lumbermen had been cutting in the vicinity, it had been so well constructed that it was still in fair condition. There was a heavy door still hanging on one hinge. As it threatened to shut him in, Will propped it open with a stick.

The interior, as revealed by the open door, was rather uninviting, with its rough walls, and nails driven in here and there. On one side some wooden bunks were badly in need of repair. The hard ground floor was covered with cans, empty rifle and revolver cartridges, and a large miscellaneous collection of the cast-off belongings of the former tenants. In one corner a roughly constructed ladder led up to what had evidently been a sort of loft. Time had rotted the floor, the greater part of it lying on the ground below. The ladder rested on a heavy beam running close across one corner of the structure, and a short distance below the roof. This

beam had evidently been the nucleus of the loft, and was now the only sign of it time had left remaining.

The sky looked through the roof in several places, but the strong log walls would withstand many a storm yet. A short inspection served to satisfy Will's curiosity, and coming out he struck off in the direction of his home, intending to slowly proceed thither.

A short distance from the cabin he glanced upward, attracted by a large bird slowly flying among the trees. As he followed its movements with his eye, suddenly his glance encountered something which seemed to freeze the blood in his veins.

There in a tree, a short distance in advance, lay stretched along a limb a large animal watching him intently. Will stopped short. He at once recognized the beast as a cougar, and an extraordinarily large one it appeared to his startled eyes. It was far better to avoid an encounter, if possible, he knew, but there lay the difficulty. From the creature's position on the limb, with his tail switching from side to side, his sharp claws sinking deep into the bark of the tree, and his gleaming eyes fixed steadily on the boy, he was evidently on the point of making a spring.

Alone in the forest, facing such an enemy, was enough to make an experienced hunter quail. Will stood stock still. He seemed unable to move, though he well knew that only prompt action could by any possibility save him. To risk a shot in the cougar's present position would be almost useless, but as nothing else seemed left him, he determined to fire. Should he fail to mortally wound his antagonist, he would be practically defenceless, for before he could reload, the animal would be upon him, and the hunting-knife, which was his only belt weapon, would be but a poor defence.

So, as nothing else was apparently to be done, Will determined to trust to a lucky shot, and raised his rifle, but before he could aim it, the cougar, with an unearthly screech, bounded from his perch, and landed within a few feet of him.

Not a moment was now to be lost, and with a palpi-

tating heart the boy took a hasty aim and fired. Then, throwing down his gun, he turned sharply and dashed back in the direction from which he had come. He knew better than to wait to see the effect of his shot, and it was well that he did so, for scarcely had he gone a rod when he became aware that he had not succeeded in killing the cougar.

For a few moments after he had fired all was quiet; and, glancing back, Will hoped to see the beast in his death-throes, but no such welcome sight met his eyes. What he did see, and what instantly sent him off again at his best speed, was the cougar slowly rising and biting viciously at a wounded forepaw from which a stream of blood flowed. Then he uttered several frightful screams, and came bounding after him in eager pursuit.

Will looked no longer; he had seen enough. But where he was running to, or what he hoped to gain by running, he scarcely knew. He was miles away from the nearest house, and not likely to meet any one to whom he could look for aid. To climb a tree would be useless, and yet he had grave cause to fear that, unless the chase was speedily brought to a termination, he would be overhauled by his pursuer, who came on, his progress, to be sure, greatly hindered by his wounded paw, but still at such a pace as threatened to rapidly cover the intervening space between the two.

Will was becoming tired and winded, but, with a fixed idea of keeping himself out of the clutches of the cougar as long as possible, he ran on. In a minute more the cabin which he had quitted a short time before came in view. Perhaps it would offer a shelter, and, exerting his remaining strength, the boy dashed inside, the cougar at his very heels. There was no time to shut the door and keep him out, as he had hoped to do, and with a despairing cry Will sank to the floor.

Just then he happened to see the dilapidated ladder standing in the corner. With a last effort he leaped to it, and mounting hastily, drew himself up on the cross-beam against which it rested,—not a second too soon,

either, for as he reached the top of the ladder, the cougar sprang through the open door, and with a single bound landed directly underneath him. Exerting all his strength, Will pushed heavily against the ladder, and with a sigh of satisfaction saw it fall to the ground. That at least would offer no easy path for his pursuer.

The fall of the ladder somewhat disconcerted the cougar, and he sprang back, landing against and breaking the stick which Will had, on first entering the cabin, stuck in the ground to keep the heavy door open.

The door, no longer held open, swung slowly shut, and the cabin was in almost total darkness, relieved only by the light streaming through several holes in the dilapidated roof.

The cougar, nothing daunted, crept slowly back from the door, his tail switching, and his eyes, shining like two live coals in the semi-darkness, fixed steadily on the boy, who was clinging with all his might to his scanty support. Suddenly the animal launched his body forward and upward directly at Will, who shrank as close as possible to the wall at his back and held his breath. A moment and the suspense was over, for the animal with a low growl dropped back to the floor, having failed to reach his victim. Again and again he sprang upward, but never succeeded in quite gaining a foothold. Once indeed his forepaws did strike the beam on which Will lay, and the boy's heart sank within him; but, owing to the wound which Will had succeeded in inflicting, the animal was unable to retain his hold and again dropped back.

Finally his vindictive hate seemed to cool with the realization that he could not reach the boy, and he began scratching at the door with the evident purpose of seeking the fresh outer air, but the heavy door resisted all his attempts and remained shut.

After a few moments he retired to a corner, and, stretching out, began licking his wounded paw, meanwhile keeping a watchful eye on Will, and growling loudly if he made the least movement.

As may be imagined, the lad was getting very un-

comfortable in his cramped position. Less than two feet above him was the roof, and with the rough walls forming the corner of the cabin so close as to barely admit of his changing his position at all, his precarious refuge did not offer very inviting quarters.

The cougar, though he might have left the cabin at first, could he have opened the door, now seemed to have given up all thought of getting out, and from his corner, but a few feet away, glared fixedly at the boy. Occasionally, to relieve the monotony, he would creep slowly forward, and, launching himself upward, endeavor to reach the cross-beam, but owing to his wounded forepaw he always fell short of his mark.

After each fresh attempt Will breathed easier, for he noticed that, doubtless owing to the loss of blood and the narrow confines of the cabin, the animal's leaps seemed to lose their power, and each time he fell further short. Nothing daunted, apparently, after a few minutes' rest he would again creep slowly forward and repeat the attempt.

Will was thus kept in a lively state of terror continually, for fear the cougar might finally be able to reach him. The heavy log walls on either side offered no means of exit, and he had a sort of shrinking timidity about descending and making his way out through the door. Glancing up, he noticed by the small bit of sky visible through several holes in the roof, that it was getting late in the afternoon.

A thought struck him. Perhaps he could get out on the roof. He turned on his back and looked directly above him. The wood seemed soft and rotten in many places, and with his knife, which, fortunately, he still had in his belt, he determined to at least make the effort. The roof here was less than two feet above him.

Cautiously raising himself to a half-sitting position, he began to cut a hole sufficiently large to admit of his squeezing through. With one hand he plied the knife, while with the other he clung tenaciously to his slender support. He had to work slowly and exert the greatest caution lest he lose his balance and fall.

The cougar from below watched Will's movements with evident displeasure, and growled continuously, occasionally trying to reach him by an upward bound. This disconcerted Will considerably, and once he almost dropped his knife.

After some time he succeeded in cutting a small hole through, sufficiently large to allow of his slipping his left hand through. With this more secure hold he could work to better advantage, and he plied his knife vigorously. After more hard work he had cut a jagged hole through the roof sufficiently large, he judged, to squeeze his body through. He had been materially aided by discovering a large, soft, rotted spot in the wood, a little to one side of where he had first begun operations. He was thus able to cut enough of the roof away for his purpose in a comparatively short time.

Bestowing a parting glance on his enemy below, Will carefully drew himself through the hole, and in a few moments was standing on the roof. The cougar saw him disappear with a mournful howl, and a despairing effort to reach him, but the leap was too high for him.

Glancing down at him, Will muttered: "Well, you're caged fast enough, my fine fellow, and I'll have your skin for the scare and trouble you have given me."

Cautiously making his way over the shaky roof, Will let himself down at one corner and started to look for his rifle, which he picked up a few rods from the cabin. Carefully loading it, the brave boy clambered back on the roof, and from that point of vantage had no difficulty in putting a bullet through the cougar's heart.

When satisfied his enemy was really dead, Will let himself down at the corner again and pushed open the door, where lay the cougar, stone dead.

Hastening home, he soon returned with his father, with whose assistance the skin was easily removed, and this, with the money paid him by the county for ridding the place of such a dangerous animal, was amply sufficient to fit him out properly for his much-longed-for term at the country school.

We are accustomed to think of Ernest Renan as the exponent of philosophy and polemics; but here is a simple love-story from his pen, written with the same air of frankness and honesty which lends such a charm to his great work. The tale has been translated and adapted for ROMANCE by H. L. B. Porter.

THE LOVE OF A LIFE-TIME.

My sister once related to me a love-story, which illustrates the peculiar intensity, especially in matters of the heart, which marks the Breton character. The tale was related to her by one of her friends, the daughter of the heroine, whom I will call Emma Rosilis.

She was not perfectly beautiful, but her face had an indescribable charm. Her eyes had the most exquisite softness, and her delicate eyebrows almost seemed to possess a soul, while her skin was so fine that it betrayed the slightest agitation by fugitive blushes.

Little Emma Rosilis went regularly to church with her book of hours, and the truth is that toward the age of sixteen or eighteen there was no place in her little soul but for one young man, of about twenty or twenty-two, whom she saw often, and whom I will call Emilien.

Emma had known Emilien ever since she had known herself. Moreover she dreamed what she did not think, until it happened one day that she found Emilien was occupying the entire cavity of her little heart.

The young man whom she loved had a good, though not a strong, nature; but his simplicity, his absence of all pretence, were most pleasing to Emma. She had not known any young man superior to him, and, indeed, in the little world where she moved she had not met many young men of any kind.

This love of Emma's soon became most absorbing. During entire days she would remain motionless, almost as though she were in a trance, dreaming of her beloved. Naturally she said nothing of what she experienced, either to the one she loved, or to her relations,

or to her companions. Her discretion was so absolute that no one knew anything of what filled her.

While Emma lived only in her love for Emilien, he thought little of her. He found her pleasing, as did all the world, but he never thought of telling her so.

He was a commonplace and passive being, and then, after all, was he to blame? Emma was so modest that she could scarcely be distinguished from her friends,—you would have said she sought only to hide herself.

One day, while she was talking with her companions at a little reunion at the foot of the garden, many things were spoken of. The news which had a freshness for all was of the approaching marriage of Emilien to Anna M——. It was spoken of as a certain thing. Emma heard it all. Such was the control which she had over herself, however, that no one suspected that a poniard had entered her heart. She was quiet, arose a little while after, and retired without giving any sign of the frightful wound which she had just received.

Another bit of news was circulated a few days after, in the company of the same young people, assembled in the same garden. Emma had entered as novice into the community of Ursulines of the little village of L——. As she was very pious, this surprised no one. Her secret had belonged so exclusively to herself that no one reproached her. The idea occurred to no one that the marriage of Emilien was the cause of her consecrating herself to religion.

The convent of the Ursulines admitted divers degrees of religious vocations. By the side of the sisters bound to the order by a perpetual vow, there were pious persons wearing a costume which was like that of the order, minus the veil. These practised the same observances, without assuming any permanent obligations. The greater part took the vows at the end of some years, but there was more than one example of devoted sisters who re-entered the world after years spent in the convent.

It was into this class of sisters that poor Emma

entered. Everything was as usual in her admission, in her novitiate, in her conduct in the convent.

She became a *dévotée* of the most perfect regularity, pious as the others, never in fault, esteemed by her superiors. Her pale face, in the white linen which surrounded it, had the beatific calm characteristic of the sisterhood. Assiduous in prayers and in all other pious exercises, she yielded quickly to the religious habits of the cloister. At the end of some days the slow and monotonous routine of the regular convent life had dulled her sensibilities, and her ordinary state became a kind of gentle sleep.

Had she succeeded in driving from her heart the image which had captured her whole being?

After a fashion,—yet she had not even tried. The suspicion came not to her for an instant that her love was culpable. It was, as in the canticles, "a bouquet of myrrh in her bosom." She would have doubted God, rather than her right to this sentiment which filled her. She distinguished not her love from her piety, nor her piety from her love. She even tasted in her austerities an additional charm. She found in wounding herself a sort of delight. She experienced an intense joy in believing that she suffered all this for the one she loved, and in saying that she saw no other man but him. Such was the innocence and purity of her imagination that never a scruple came to her for her dreams of love. She was so certain of being right that she never felt obliged to accuse herself to her confessor.

Thus five years rolled by, without a trouble, without a storm. Did the possibility of recovering Emilien ever present itself to her spirit? Dreamed she at moments that it was Emilien, and not the Church, that she had really espoused, and that she whom he had espoused was in very feeble health? As nothing that passed in the little town was unknown in the convent, she knew that Anna and Emilien had two little girls. Did Emma's heart never whisper to her, "Thou shalt be their mother some day?"

Anna had a sister in the convent. One day, accord-

ing to the custom at such times, prayers were requested by the women of the community for a relative of their number who was dying. The name of this dying person was repeated that evening to Emma. It was Anna. The two little girls, who soon had no mother, were confined to the care of their aunt, the nun. Emma assisted her in attending to them. From this time Emma experienced a change. She could scarcely pray. She tried to reclothe herself in her hair-cloth, and she found it insupportable. The austerities which were familiar to her became revolting. She denied herself the communion for eight days. Her peace was at an end, her profound piety extinguished. She believed herself morbid, selfish, almost wicked.

At this time she felt obliged to tell all to her confessor, the chaplain of the convent. He was not a great man, but he was very sensible. He advised at first that she should wait; then he saw the gravity of the evil. After all, Emma had pronounced no vows. She had not worn the whole costume of the order. The veil had not shadowed her forehead. The chaplain had a benevolent heart. The sacredness of the confessional forbade him from consulting his bishop. He formed his opinion from his own reasonings. Convinced that it was for the salvation of Emma, he confided the two little daughters of Anna to her personal care. He hoped also to give an outlet to the restlessness which began to disturb her; on these orphans she might outpour the fullness of her heart.

The father came to see his little girls, and Emma conducted them to the parlor. The shock of seeing him again was terrible. She burst into tears. He was just the same as she had always seen him in her dreams. As for her, she was sadly emaciated. Her excessive weeping deprived her of what little strength she had. Her self-control entirely forsook her. Gazing into her tear-dimmed eyes, Emilien discovered there her love. The good man, commonplace as he was, at last comprehended the situation. He had a very tender heart, and he was profoundly touched.

Some months after, Emma and Emilien were united in marriage. What no one had suspected, all the world now saw. The entire community married them.

For the rest of her life Emma tasted without a moment's intermission the most perfect felicity that one can dream of. During forty years she drifted, as it were, in a Pacific Ocean of happiness and love.

Emma and Emilien had eight children, from whom they never separated the two daughters of poor Anna. They brought them all up well.

Some speak of the "storms of love." What childishness! Passion has its inequalities, but true love has no storms. The happiness of Emma, after she had won her lover, was as a full sea without tides. Even Death was hardly for her. Life went out because the hour of finishing had come. She died at the age of seventy years, without sickness.

My sister found this a perfect example of love as she comprehended it. She esteemed Emilien the happiest of men; for him an excellent woman had condemned herself to a life of austerity—giving to him the most complete guarantee of the exclusiveness of her love. During five years she saw not a single man. She had accepted with innocent joy the expectation of an external exclusion. In all battles that come in life there is a recompense for those alone who dare. Happiness is like glory. To obtain it, it is necessary to play high.

One day I hazarded the observation to my sister, "It was a great deal of devotion to bestow upon a mediocre man."

"Oh! that was no matter," she responded. "Emilien certainly did not merit so much happiness, but who does? See the false idea of the Parisian men of letters, who assume that great men only are worthy of being loved. What childishness! You will see some day the ridiculousness of all that. Ah, the heroes who have saved their country, I acknowledge they may reward affection; but the daubers of canvas, the blotters of paper, what have they for the heart? What is a husband that belongs to every one?"

Francis Churchill Williams has written for ROMANCE this characteristic sketch of Southern life in the old days.

TWO OLD FOOLS.

Colonel Beebe's hat lay on the piazza-floor, and Colonel Beebe himself, his long, thin legs hanging from the hammock, was enjoying indolently his Henry Clay while he debated whether he should go over to see the Major now, or wait until it was cooler. He had just decided in favor of waiting, when he heard a trampling from the side of the house.

For a moment he gave it little attention. Then the long-drawn bay of a hound came to his ears. The Colonel's feet dropped to the floor and his head was raised. Another howl from the invisible hound, and he pulled himself to his feet, picked up his hat and turned down the low stone steps in the direction of the sound.

As he came around the corner of the house, there was a sudden crunching of the gravel on the driveway, a bellow of mingled fear and anger, and the Colonel was knocked flat by a yearling heifer which, snorting its surprise, trailed across the grass-plot, hotly pursued by the Colonel's hound.

The Colonel quickly scrambled to his feet, indulged in an appropriate amount of profanity and looked about for the cause of his downfall. He saw the heifer and the hound. The pursued was making at top speed for a gap in the stake-and-rider fence, where the crushed rails showed that its head and feet had been at work. As his eye fell upon the broken fence, he again indulged in some highly-flavored remarks, and followed them with an encouraging yell to the hound. Inspired by this, the dog promptly bit the heifer in the flank, nearly tumbling it over in the gap of the fence and drawing from it a bawling cry of distress. The Colonel dashed forward to urge on the hound, but just as he

reached the fence, there was a shot from the bushes, and the hound came scurrying back, its tail between its legs. At almost the same instant a long-legged man emerged from behind a tree-trunk a little way off and ran forward, all the while endeavoring to pour powder and shot into the barrel of the gun which he carried.

At the fence-gap he confronted Colonel Beebe. There was a mutual start as the men recognized each other. Then the Colonel recovered himself. "Major Hawkins!" he broke out; "I believe you have shot my hound?"

"I have done that very thing!" returned the Major with decision. "And let me add, sah, that I shall repeat the performance every time that brute of yours chases my cattle!"

The Major and he were old cronies, and, though both were hot-blooded, they had never had a serious falling-out, and the Colonel tried hard to restrain his temper. But this was the third time that the Major's heifer had broken down the fence separating the properties and made havoc with the Colonel's garden. The latter felt that patience well nigh had ceased to be a virtue, particularly now in view of the Major's threats.

"Major Hawkins!" he began, and there was significance in his use of the title; "I have no wish to foment any trouble; but most positively I shall not allow that '*cattle*' of yours on my place again. See that she is kept off, please! As to shooting my dog, sah; that is a matter which only an apology from you can recompense me for, and I trust you will render me one immediately?"

"I will do nothing of the kind! The best thing you can do is to shoot your whelp, and save me the trouble of doing so!" and the Major tapped his gun suggestively.

"Then all I can say," came slowly from the Colonel's lips, "is that you are no gentleman!"

The Major started as if he had been stung. For the instant he did not realize the import of the words. Then a dull flush crept into his cheeks, usually very sallow, and he said concisely: "You are a liar, sah!"

The fatal words were spoken. The color leaped into

the Colonel's face, and the Major's flush grew deeper while his eyes returned the flash in those of the other. The two faced each other in silence for a moment. Each was so taken aback that for the instant the insult of the other could find no adequate return in speech.

Then the Colonel drew himself up and said icily:

"You can understand that this means only one thing?"

The Major replied with the slightest of bows.

"I have a pair of pistols at my house," continued the Colonel. "With you permission I will send for them. The sooner this is settled, the better?"

The Major inclined his head a trifle, and the other turned and called: "Israel! Israel!"

There was no reply, and again he raised his voice. This time there was an answering call and a shuffling of feet, which gradually became more distinct. A little later a white-haired old darkey came into view.

"D'yo call, Marse Kunn'l?" he asked, stopping at the edge of the bushes and scraping with one foot while he fingered a battered straw hat.

"Yes," said the Colonel. "You know those pistols of mine in my dressing-case? Fetch them to me!"

"Yo dewelin pistils?"

"Yes. Be quick!"

The darkey looked at the men in turn. He noted the attitude of each and the look in their faces.

"Yo' ain't goin' t' fight, Marse?" he ventured anxiously, not moving.

"That's none of your business, you rascal!" thundered the Colonel. "Go!"

An instant the darkey stood, nervously playing with his hat-brim. Then he turned and moved away.

The two men did not look at each other. Somehow they disliked to. The Major stood his gun against the fence, and took a long time to arrange it to his liking. The Colonel stripped the leaves from a twig he broke from a bush. Each had his back toward the other. The minutes went by. But at last there was a slow step, and Israel came up. He came reluctantly, as if he hoped that time would cause them to change their minds. He

looked hopefully at them; but saw no encouragement. Both the Colonel and the Major appeared as coolly determined as could be, though the color had gone from their cheeks.

Israel could not prevent a deep sigh of despair, which the Colonel heard. "Shut up, you black imp!" he muttered savagely. "Give me those pistols!" "Will the grove suit you?" he asked, turning toward the Major.

"Perfectly!" said the latter and the three took up their way, the Colonel leading, the Major next and Israel, at his master's command, bringing up the rear and dragging his feet as though they were weighted. A few minutes of walking, and they came to a small open space surrounded by trees. The Colonel halted and faced about.

"Will this do?" he asked.

"Yes!" said the Major simply.

"There is no advantage in position, I believe. The sun shines across the glade?"

"None!"

"But we had better toss for positions anyhow," said the Colonel, and he deftly flipped a coin into the air. The Major called "heads"; and "heads" it was.

"I will take the southern end," he said. The Colonel bowed acquiescence.

"I presume you will be satisfied if Israel attends to the loading?" the Colonel remarked. "He has done it before!"—with the slightest of smiles.

"Quite!" returned the Major, ignoring the last words.

"Then, Israel, load those pistols, and do it carefully!" commanded the Colonel. "Do you hear me?" as the darkey stood gaping at him with a terror-stricken face.

"Yes, Marse!" mumbled Israel, picking up the weapons mechanically. He moved over to a nearby stump, and for a minute sat motionless with the pistols in his lap. The Colonel's thunderous tones brought him to movement. He glanced at the two men standing stiffly at some distance from each other. Then suddenly he

began to load one of the pistols. The Colonel, seeing him proceeding with the task, turned to the Major.

"Ten paces?" he asked.

The Major nodded, and the other was irritated more than ever by his silence,—but he went on. "We will put the pieces under the nigger's hat. Then we will draw them! Are you agreed?" He clipped off his words as he continued, "Israel will count. On the 'three,' we will fire?"

This time the Major vouchsafed agreement in words.

A minute more and Israel came forward slowly with the pistols, one in either hand. At the Colonel's order, he laid them on a fallen tree-trunk and placed his hat over them. The Major drew one; his opponent took the other.

The two men took position back to back, and then moved away five paces and wheeled about so as to face each other.

"Israel," said the Colonel a bit huskily, "Count one, two, three, and, if I am killed, see that I am decently buried!"

The Major winced perceptibly at this last order; but the next instant was as calm and his face as impassive as ever. Both men raised their pistol-arms, and, strange to say, there was at least a momentary tremor of the hands and a nervous twitching of the lips as they looked into each other's eyes.

"One!" counted Israel. The pistols steadied and came into line with the breasts of the men.

"Two!" Israel pronounced the word distinctly, so that it cut sharply on the sense of hearing.

An instant's pause, then: "Three!"

The pistols cracked together, and a cloud of blue smoke curtained the men and then drifted lazily before the slight draught of air.

The Colonel, as erect as ever, quickly bent to one side and peered past the smoke at his opponent. His eyes fell upon the Major, apparently untouched also. For a moment neither spoke; but there was a flash of joy in the face of each, as quickly succeeded by

one of seeming mortification. The Major stepped forward.

"That was an inexcusable miss of yours, Colonel Beebe!" he exclaimed.

"No worse than yours, Major Hawkins!" retorted the Colonel. "Ten paces and a good light! You should have hit to a certainty!"

"The trigger of this confounded pistol pulled too hard!" explained the Major, with haste.

"And that d—— nigger of mine startled me by jumping just as we fired," returned the Colonel.

The Colonel thought he heard a smothered laugh at this. He turned like a flash upon the darkey, a sudden suspicion coming to him.

"Israel, you d—— nigger!" he fairly shouted; "what was the matter with the loading of those pistols? There was something wrong! Confess it, you black rascal!"

"Oh, Marse Kunn'l, don't be killing dis po' nigger; but I didn't put no balls in dose pistils! I didn't want de Major and yo' a killin' each oder!"

"I've a good mind to horsewhip you within an inch of your life—!" began the Colonel.

"But you won't!" broke in the Major.

Then the Colonel looked at the Major, and the Major at the Colonel. A smile appeared on the former's lips, and the latter returned it. A moment more, and the Colonel extended his hand impulsively. The Major advanced and grasped it firmly.

They stood there, holding each other's hands for an instant, and then the Major observed slowly and emphatically, as if he were stating an indisputable fact which he had just discovered:

"Beebe, I think we are a couple of old fools!"

"I quite agree with you, Hawkins!" returned the Colonel quite as positively and, as if by one impulse, the two locked arms and walked off.

Israel stood watching them for a minute. Then he picked up the pistols, and remarked sagely, but with just the slightest of quivers in his voice: "A coupl' o' ole fools!"